"YOST MIDDLETON'S WIFE" and "THE OCEAN'S CRUCIBLE."
TWO POWERFUL NEW STORIES IN NEXT WEEK'S LEDGER.

CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XL. NO. 23. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1912. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

JEALOUS OF HERSELF;

Or, Berenice's Mysterious Flight

By Agnes Dorothy Camp

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CHAPTER I.

"YOU'RE awfully hard on me, Berenice."

The speaker, a frank, clean, typical American, looked wistfully at the girl.

"Not at all," denied Berenice Marther.

The diamonds on her fingers flashed as she removed her gloves and tossed them on the heap of costly furs at her side. "It's you who are hard on me. Give up this absurd trip to the Philippine Islands, and I'll cancel my engagement with Beak and Hawk."

Jerome Fairchild studied the pretty, flowerlike face for a moment. Then he said, almost reproachfully: "You don't seem to realize what it means to me to be separated from you for a whole year, and you speak as if I'd planned to go from choice, when you know that only imperative commands from my father could have torn me from your side."

Berenice shrugged her shoulders.

"We love each other, dearest, and the time will soon pass," he continued, a pleading question in his tones.

"It'll quickly pass for you, but for me it will be different. For your sake I gave up my profession. I've only accepted this engagement to keep me from dying of loneliness while you are away."

"But I've told my father and mother that you'd never return to the stage, and they might think you're variable," he demurred, an anxious light in his eyes.

Berenice pouted.

"Your parents should remember that I made some sacrifices in giving up my work, and shouldn't expect me to consent to part with you for a whole year. In short, Jerome, my mind is made up."

He answered her in light tones that he was far from feeling. "My dearest, I don't like to hear you speak like that. When you do, I fear you may mean what you say."

"Certainly I do," Berenice assented. "I may be a little hard on you, but I shall be unreasonably hard on myself if I fall in with your plans. You would throw me upon my own resources for twelve months. I may not enter the sacred portals of your set—I'm not your wife yet. I must renounce my old friends, because they're not good enough for the future Mrs. Jerome Fairchild—I who have never spent an evening alone in my life."

She shuddered at the thought and broke down with a little sob.

"Take me with you, Jerome," she begged. "I'd rather be the wife of a chaplin in the Philippines than alone in New York."

Jerome Fairchild looked gravely at the lovely, childlike face turned imploringly upon him. Berenice was twenty-five, but looked much younger. For four years she had been a favorite of the footlights. Without any apparent effort she held her sway season after season. Her managers were making fortunes, in fact, a great deal more than Berenice herself. For the girl had no head for figures. So long as Beak and Hawk supplied her with money for her wants—which were many—she never worried about the future.

She had chosen the handsome young preacher from among her host of admirers, and would have given up there and then all thoughts of future triumphs for his sake. But the poor moth was appalled at the thought of a year in solitude.

Jerome shook his head sadly.

"Berenice," he said, "I'd give all the world, if I possessed it, to take you with me. But it's impossible." He drew her to him, and her tears fell softly.

"Come, dearest, cheer up, and let's see if we can't take a nice little house in the suburbs. Amabel is devoted and faithful. She would stay with you. I'll write to you by every boat, and the year will

will pass before we hardly realize it."

She shivered with horror at the mere thought.

"You'd get away from the pestilential managers and unwelcome admirers," he added, doubtfully.

Berenice only sobbed, "Don't leave me, Jerome." Poor child she knew her limitations. Light and music were life to her, and she couldn't see how she was to bury herself until Jerome's return. On the other hand, Jerome wondered how, if she loved him, she could hesitate, when he would be willing to wait years, ah, even to the end of his life for her.

Berenice raised a woe-begone face, leaving a little pink daub on his shoulder where her cheek had rested.

"Would it be any use for me to ask your father to send some one else?" she entreated. "I don't see why this journey should be imposed on you."

Jerome Fairchild looked tenderly into the sweet, upturned face, and again shook his head. "My father and mother," he said, "have earnestly desired that I should become rector of one of the most influential districts in the city, where there is an immense power for good, where a thousand eyes follow all I do, and a thousand lives are modeled after what I think. They believe that neither parents nor any woman has a right to stand between a minister and his life's work, not even for love. They told me only today that the time had come for me to do all these things for their own sake, not because they were my parents' ambitions."

The rapt expression on Jerome's face awed the girl into silence. She tried to get a glimmer of his meaning, but failed hopelessly. Then she did what most people do under such circumstances—she talked erratically and illogically. She began by roundly condemning his father's conduct in separating them, then inveighed against his mother's total disregard of her (Berenice's) feelings—the misery and heartache she was feeling. She wound up by throwing the blame on Jerome himself for the proposed arrangements, for he had deliberately allowed his parents to make plans that were just breaking her heart.

"Besides," she accused, fretfully, "you said this parish was to be in the city. So why do you go away?"

"This is to be my last year of probation," he replied, seriously.

Fairchild dare not tell her that his father was sending him away, feeling sure that she would not stand the test of a year. Mr. Fairchild had even tried to exact a promise from his son that he would not communicate with the fair Berenice. But that Jerome refused to do. If Berenice loved him well enough to leave the stage and spend a year fitting herself to be a minister's wife, she deserved some attention. Jerome tried to interest his mother in Berenice. If she would only call on the poor little thing to encourage her. But Mrs. Fairchild was adamant. "The poor little thing must prove herself worthy of so much condescension," was her ultimatum.

When Berenice had relieved her mind of all the spiteful things the amiable, mirth-loving girl ever found room for, she jumped up and rang the bell for tea. Then she promised Jerome that she would bury herself in the darkest suburb within fifty miles of the city, and sleep like a dormouse until his return.

Jerome hugged her rapturously, and before he had half realized the joy her words had given him, she had plunged into a rhapsody about her new part, and went on to laud her managers and the leading man to the skies. Before he left she was radiantly happy, and to save his life, he couldn't tell whether she had promised to cancel the engagement with Beak and Hawk. As she tiptoed to kiss him good-by he said:

"Berenice, you're a witch! It's a good thing you didn't live in the days when they would have burned you at the stake."

"Ah, dear," she said half-seriously, half-laughingly, "the fathers still persecute women for witchery."

CHAPTER II.

Jonathan Fairchild and his son stood together on the deck of an outgoing trans-Pacific steamer. Now that the separation was at hand, the father's eyes rested eagerly attentive on Jerome, his only child—strong, handsome and athletic. He wondered, for the first time, if he was acting fairly by the boy in sending him away for a year, lest he might undermine his health and unfit himself for the life they had mapped out for him.

"Doctor Ferguson was to meet us at half-past ten," he said, pulling out his watch. "You'll find the Doctor an entertaining traveling companion. Don't read too hard, and make the trip as much of a holiday as you can, my boy," laying his hand affectionately on the young man's shoulder.

"Father," said Jerome, "do reconsider your verdict before it's too late. This appointment can be filled in twenty-four hours. If you only knew or would consent to meet Miss Marther, you would agree with me that she is the loveliest, most amiable——"

"To be sure, my dear boy," interrupted Mr. Fairchild restlessly. The portly rector was thinking of the night when he and his wife crept like two culprits into back seats of the brilliantly lighted theater on Broadway, and Berenice excoriated their pure souls with her songs and dances.

"I never doubted your good taste," resumed the good man. "But Berenice Marther is not a suitable wife for you."

"Oh, father!" interjected Jerome. "You must see her. She would grace a palace."

"Yes, yes, my son, but a minister's wife must have grace of mind as well as body. You must trust to your mother's judgment and mine. You've promised us that you'll not see Miss Marther for a year. A Fairchild never breaks his word. If, on your return, you are both of the same mind, and the girl does not appear in public meanwhile, separation and time will have tried the depths of your mutual love. Then we shall no longer refuse to countenance your engagement."

Jerome took his father's outstretched hand. "We shall try to consider your wishes in all things," he said, dutifully.

"I presume you had no difficulty in obtaining a promise from Miss Marther not to appear on the stage again?" said Mr. Fairchild, a little tersely.

For a brief moment Jerome hesitated.

"Berenice will not appear in public again, not even among her friends. Father," he cried, impulsively, "aren't we asking too much of her, and giving nothing in return? If mother would call on her, she is such a loving little thing. She will suffer so from loneliness. Seclusion means so much more to her sprightly nature than to the other people we know."

Mr. Fairchild could hardly refrain from laughing at his son's infatuation. He had no faith in the girl. But he answered seriously.

"Our request is not unreasonable," he said. "We are asking her to retire from the stage and give the public a chance to forget her. In return, she will bury her past in the unsullied soil of the Fairchild family tree. As your wife she will fill a position that any woman might envy."

Jerome was not glad to be a Fairchild at that moment, but he saw that it would be of no use to try to change his father's feeling toward poor Berenice. Just then they were joined by Doctor Ferguson.

Jerome's traveling companion was a tall, handsome man of forty. Without his professional bag—which just now happened to be a suitcase—you would have known he was a doctor. He always seemed to be looking for symptoms, or diagnosing your case. After a genial handshake with the father and son, he mentally felt Jerome's pulse and listened to his heart. He was in possession of the young minister's secret. Though they were slightly acquainted, their duties would bring them together for the next year. Ferguson was going out to the Government Hospital in the Philippines, where Jerome would be chaplain.

"I think your son will stand the wear and tear of the climate," said the Doctor, addressing Mr. Fairchild senior, at the same time looking admiringly at the younger man's physique.

Mr. Fairchild experienced another twinge of conscience.

"The conditions have not been exaggerated? Is the climate really a hard one?" he asked.

Dr. Ferguson looked surprised at the question. "Why the variation of temperature alone would kill a donkey," he declared. "And it's a fact that not one applicant for posts out of hundreds is selected by the Government. A man who has been there and is ever so slightly acclimated is preferred to one with more qualifications."

"Oh," thought the now really anxious father, "his mother must not hear of this!" Aloud he said: "Of course I trust to you, Doctor, to tie a return label on my son, if you see that the climate is too much for him."

The old friends exchanged meaning glances.

"There's no occasion for anxiety on your son's account," answered the Doctor, cheerfully. "He seems to have the constitution of a lion."

"Uncle, I want to be a hospital nurse."

Jerome apparently had not heard a word of the conversation. He stood moodily watching the deckhands haul the belated baggage to the hold of the boat, and the stooping figures of men carrying mail-bags. A few more passengers hurried aboard carrying all sorts of odd-shaped baggage, and wearing mysterious traveling clothes—prepared for the worst emergency, but trying to look as if they didn't expect anything unusual.

Just then a bell screeched loudly and a hoarse voice yelled, "All ashore!" Again the bell rang hysterically. Mr. Fairchild shook the travelers' hands, and was soon lost in the nervous rush on the gangplank. Another moment it was cleared. As the last bell shrieked out, Jerome, leaning over the rail, saw a taxicab run through the crowd of those waving farewells to their friends.

"Somebody left behind," remarked Doctor Ferguson.

Jerome idly watched the machine make its way and stop at the gang-plank. A second later, a girl started violently and waved his cap. Issuing from the cab were Berenice and Amabel. They were too far away, but in his mind he saw the lovely big eyes well with tears. All he could see with the naked eye was Berenice's dainty form enveloped in furs.

Amabel waved a handkerchief, but Berenice stood with outstretched hands, which the men on board could see were full of flowers. Jerome watched her until he could no longer distinguish her from the crowd.

CHAPTER III.

Amabel Marther and Berenice were cousins and orphans. Both had been brought up by a well-to-do tradesman uncle. Stephen Marther was a kindly and genial man, and allowed the girls to follow their own inclinations.

Berenice was a dazzling blonde, immature, perhaps, but none the less bewitching; and Amabel, a faint reflex of her cousin, but with a tender womanliness quite absent in Berenice. Beauty like Berenice's is not usually left long to shine under a bushel, and she managed somehow to appear at every local affair in the neighborhood. She was soon discovered by an actor-manager who saw great possibilities in the lovely, sprightly girl.

Berenice was delighted with her prospects and became more volatile than ever. As it became known in her little circle that she was studying for the stage, she became more popular than before, and was soon reveling in the dances, fairs, amateur theatricals, flirtations, and other amusements dear to her frivolous heart. One hostess, seeing what an attraction she was, insisted on her spending the season with her family in the city. Before half the winter was over, the alert manager, who had not allowed the grass to grow under his feet, had presented a new star to the eager, hungry public, and for four years Berenice reigned supreme.

Meanwhile Amabel had taken up nursing, at the time when Berenice was making her first bow to a New York audience. Amabel had just received a diploma entitling her to wear a Red Cross badge. Before she was really started on her duties, however, she received an urgent call from Berenice to act as a sort of companion to her. There was really not more than a year between the two girls, but Amabel was much older in manner, and proved herself a very proper chaperone.

Jerome made the acquaintance of the cousins through an old college friend, and the young minister's artistic sense was captivated by the subtle, harmonious coloring of the lovely actress. She soon dominated his heart.

While Berenice had hosts of admirers, Jerome's proposal was the first of any importance she had received. As the wife of a Fairchild she pictured herself in a delightful setting, and she really admired the handsome young aristocrat. Berenice hated work, and besides, the strain of the past few years was telling on her exotic loveliness.

She kept the first part of her promise to Jerome. That is, she took a small house within forty-five minutes of Broadway. But with all her consummate tact, Amabel was unable to steer off the faithful. They made Berenice's house a rendezvous. Every Sunday a merry party of the theatrical profession met and held high carnival. It was in vain that Amabel coaxed and scolded her capricious cousin.

Berenice, before Jerome had been gone three months, entered heart and soul in the frolic. When Amabel discovered her cousin studying a part in a new play to be produced at an early date, it was an occasion for a spirited argument.

"Berenice Marther, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" indignantly exclaimed Amabel. "You complained of being tired and ill, and wishing to retire from the profession. Now when you have this brilliant chance, you deliberately throw it away, and the twin hypocrites, Beak and Hawk, continue to feather their nests."

Seeing no further use for dissembling, Berenice looked defiant.

"It's all right, Amabel," she said, nodding positively. "I may be strong-willed, but I'm not unreasonable. Jerome's plans have rendered me my own mistress for a year. You see, I'm not even engaged to him. Every one says his terms are tyrannical." She paused for breath.

"Surely you haven't discussed Jerome with any of the people who have been down here lately?" asked Amabel, in shocked tones.

"If people do unusual things they must expect to be discussed," she answered, evasively.

"But——"

"No 'buts,' if you please. I mean to do as I like until Jerome comes back. When I'm married I must do as a minister's wife does. Until then I am as free as a bird. After all, doing as I like only consists of going back to the stage for four months, with you as my companion." She paused, and putting her elbows on the table, propped her chin on her hands, and fixed her large blue eyes on her cousin's sweet, womanly face. "Were you ever in love?" she asked.

The girl started and grew guiltily pink.

"Really, Berenice, what has that to do with it?" she cried, in protest.

But Berenice interrupted her in swift deprecation.

"Don't be vexed. I don't mean to hurt your feelings, but I have a fancy sometimes that you're in love with Jerome yourself, and don't know it."

The color flooded Amabel's face, but she met the gaze steadily.

"You are entirely wrong," she returned firmly. "I care for Jerome only as your future husband."

"Then you care for him as much as you care for me?"

Amabel nodded. "Almost."

"Almost?"

"Dear me, Berenice, you are provoking," Amabel cried, impatiently. Then she caught herself. "You're a frivolous little thing," she said. "But tell me, what arguments did Beak and Hawk bring to bear that persuaded you back to the profession?"

Instantly Berenice became animated.

"Well, it was this way," she began: "I had read the part before Jerome went away, and decided not to act again. But, oh"—clapping her hands in ecstasy—"it was a scrumptious role. So Hawk gave it to Estelle Russell——"

"Oh, oh!" interrupted Amabel. "So that's what brought Estelle here so often?"

Berenice's eyes twinkled mischievously. "It was like teaching a pig to dance an Irish jig," she laughed.

"If seeing it done is of any service, it should be easy to teach a pig to dance an Irish jig," argued Amabel.

"That's what I thought about Estelle. Poor dear old Hawk was beside himself. He begged me to go to a rehearsal, and I went."

Amabel shook her head hopelessly.

"I knew it would be no use asking you; so I just sneaked off, as we used to say at school. But I was going to tell you," she rattled on. "Estelle is impossible. She waddles through the part like a benighted duck. Hawk raced up and down, tearing at the place where the hair ought to be. And by the way, I always feel responsible for that bald spot. He tore the hair out in fistfuls when I was rehearsing my first part."

Amabel's eyes had a wondering expression.

"Why should Estelle become suddenly ungraceful and waddling?" she asked. "She made a favorable impression the only time she was called on as your understudy in 'Carmas.' Can she have any occult reason for not wanting the part?"

Berenice smiled indulgently.

"Why should a girl refuse such an opportunity?" she demanded. "Five years in the profession and never got a chance above the chorus and understudy. Here's a part with a large salary thrust on her. Why, I repeat, should she refuse it?"

Amabel still looked perplexed. "I want you to promise me, Berenice, that you won't go to another rehearsal without me."

"All right," Berenice concluded. "But you mustn't be too vigilant. One can't be prudish among one's friends."

Amabel looked anxious.

"No good will come of it," she forboded.

Berenice laughed lightly.

"You dear old wet blanket!" she cried. "Jerome fell in love with me while I was on the stage. If he gets angry because I haven't kept my promise, he will have to come back and fall in love over again. Of course it will mean a little delay, but nothing that is worth while is ever accomplished in the first attempt."

Amabel smiled faintly at the animated face and sparkling eyes.

"Berenice, you are incorrigible," she chided.

"And furthermore," resumed Berenice, airily, "I shall send Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild front-row seats for the first night, so that I may look at them for inspiration."

"Berenice, how can you talk so recklessly? I'm beginning to think that you don't love Jerome."

"Well, I'm not breaking my heart," confessed the other girl. "And to be very frank, Amabel, I don't intend to mention to any one else the understanding existing between myself and Jerome. I'm not proud of it. Do you know what my friends call him?" She leaned over and whispered in Amabel's ear. "A prig. There—that's what they call him."

Amabel was scandalized.

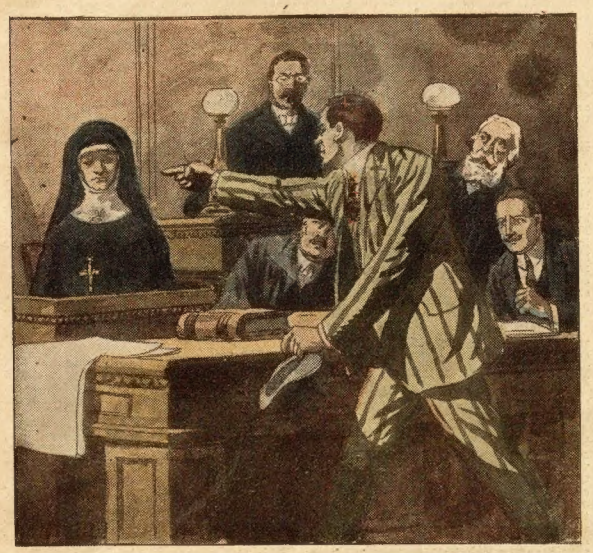
"Poor Jerome!" she thought, as Berenice, looking somewhat confused, hurried from the room. "It's a conspiracy to get her back to the business. Hawk is making piles of money, and he wouldn't offer that part to any one else. If he did,

(Continued on page nine.)

THE SECOND SON'S PLOT;

Or, A Brother's Perfidy

By Annie Brownlee



"It's a lie!" he shouted.

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Begun in No. 18, May 4. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XXV.

IT WAS only a minute's work to tie the remaining end of the cloth to the girl's waist and lower her to safety.

There was a crash, and a shower of sparks, as part of the roof fell in, but it did not disturb Arthur Fanshaw, who appeared as cool and calm as ever.

Men shouted to warn him of his danger, and women begged him to hasten, but if he heard them he made no sign. When he finally did begin to descend by means of the cloth, his descent was so slow that the people lost all patience. As he neared the ground, four stalwart fellows rushed forward and carried him bodily out of danger, and just then the walls fell with an awful crash.

Cheer after cheer rent the air, but he did not seem to hear them. He had acted the part of a hero, yet to all outward appearances he was unconscious of it.

As the men carried him out of danger and set him on the ground, he smiled one of his faint, derisive smiles, as though to say:

"What nonsense! You have done a silly thing!"

Old Mrs. Orton grasped his hand, full of thanks for the heroic rescue of her child, but he gently pushed her away.

"It is nothing," he said. "Why all this fuss?"

Without looking to right or left, he walked rapidly toward the office, and entering, closed and locked the door. It was then almost seven o'clock.

Arthur Fanshaw immediately bathed and changed his clothes. Then he packed a few articles of wearing apparel in a suitcase and called a boy:

"You can carry this grip to the station for me. We have just twenty minutes to catch the limited for the city."

He cast a hasty glance about the room, then closed and locked the door, and set out at a brisk walk for the station.

Four hours later he stood in the shadow of the Sacred Heart convent. He rang the bell, and asked to see Sister Rose. He was shown into a bare, comfortless room, and after a while Sister Rose appeared. We will pass that meeting over as too sacred to be put into print. Two hours later, the convent doors swung open, and Arthur Fanshaw passed out.

Within another two hours he sent his card into the Crown attorney's office. At the bottom of the card he hastily wrote: "Business important, can prove that the convict, Mark Heriot, is an innocent man."

He was immediately shown into the great man's office. The attorney stood looking meditatively at the card, as Arthur Fanshaw entered.

"You have given me a queer feeling, Mr. Fanshaw. I—I trust you are mistaken in this."

"I have told you the truth as I am prepared to prove," the other replied.

The representative of the Crown wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"If what you say is true, then we have made a bad business of this affair. If the convict is not Mark Heriot, then who is he?" he flashed at the other.

"He is the man he claimed to be—Mark Fanshaw, my brother."

The other looked aghast, then his eyes grew hard and steely.

"How long have you known this?" he asked.

"I knew it all the time," was the reply.

"Yet, if I remember right, you swore otherwise at the trial?"

"I admit I did. Yet I knew all the time that I was putting an impostor in my brother's place."

The other did not reply for some minutes. He seemed to be uncertain as to whether the man was sane or not. Arthur Fanshaw read the other's thoughts.

"My mind is not impaired, and never was. I did what I did with the full knowledge of the enormity of the crime I was committing. I have no excuse to offer. I came to ask you to take immediate steps to have Mark Fanshaw released and restored to his rightful position in the world."

Not a muscle of the face moved, nor the flicker of an eyelid told of the strain he must be enduring, as he spoke the words that branded him a perjurer.

"Have you thought of what this means to you, Mr. Fanshaw? You know the law deals severely with a perjurer. You are liable to arrest and imprisonment."

"I know all that, but I am willing to take the consequences. The prisoner must be released at once. His presence will be required at a trial that comes up at the assizes next week. Can you have him here by Monday night?"

"Four days," the other said, slowly. "Yes, I think I can. But you will have to go before a magistrate and make a sworn declaration of the confession you have just made. Then the prisoner can be brought here, with his guard, and he will be given another trial."

When Arthur Fanshaw left the Crown attorney's office the sun was sinking in a golden haze in the west. He had taken all the legal steps necessary to prove, for the time being, at least, that the convict, Mark Heriot, was Mark Fanshaw.

No food had crossed his lips since the evening before, and he began to feel weak and faint. The odor of fried bacon greeted his nostrils tantalizingly as he passed a restaurant on Bank street. The pangs of hunger were getting too acute to be borne with comfort. He hailed a cab, and in twenty minutes was eating dinner at his hotel.

He went to his room soon after dinner, and threw himself on the bed. He had grown to dread sleep as one might a deadly serpent. For hours he tossed restlessly on his bed, with the bitterest thoughts a man ever had for company. Finally he could endure it no longer. He rose, and taking his overcoat, left the hotel, and strolled down the almost deserted streets. It was past twelve, and the last street car had passed. He walked aimlessly about. Then onto Parliament Hill. Slowly he walked through the well-kept Parliament grounds, noticed, with a grim smile, the signs "Keep Off the Grass," but heeded them not. He strolled down the lovers' walk, and surprised a belated pair of lovers in the shadow of a huge redwood that dated its birth centuries before. On he went, heedless of where his steps led him. Soon the roar of the mighty whirlpool was in his ears, and suggested a terrible thought. "How easy it would be to end it all. Just one leap—and how easy it would be to take it—and his worries would be over. But would they really be over?" That thought troubled him a little. He would prefer to think that there was no life beyond.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The following Tuesday, the fourteenth of September, the old town hall was packed by an eager, curious throng. The fall assizes were in session, and the first case on the docket was one of peculiar local interest. It was an action brought against Mrs. Mark Fanshaw by a man whose name was given as Mark Fanshaw, husband of defendant. His plea was for the restoring of connubial rights, and that his wife be compelled to live with him as such. The case was to come up before a jury, and some of the cleverest lawyers in the land represented both sides.

So great was the interest in the town, that the mills and factories were compelled to close for the day, owing to lack of labor to operate them. The streets were thronged with people, all dressed in holiday attire, and every face turned toward the old town hall.

Grace and her mother occupied seats in the front row. Grace's face was flushed a delicate pink, and her eyes sought the floor, as the spectators craned their necks to catch a glimpse of her. Her manner was restless and anxious. Her face paled perceptibly as Arthur Fanshaw came slowly in and took a seat almost opposite her. He had given her his word that he would not allow this monstrous wrong to be carried further. Would he keep that word? Since that memorable night he had given her no inkling of his intentions. He must have read something of her thoughts in the appealing wistfulness of her face, for he smiled at her encouragingly, reassuringly.

He came in and took his seat so quietly that few had observed him. He sat there calm, and apparently as purposeless as any one in the room. His head was bent forward, and the calm, cold eyes had a thoughtful look. None guessed—save perhaps Grace—the purpose with which Arthur Fanshaw sat there. One would have said that indifference was on that calm, emotionless face, or was it—despair?

Mark Heriot—for we may call him so now—was surrounded by his inseparable friends. Among the more conspicuous was Jimmy Moore, the grocer, and Tom, the fiddler. Heriot sat close to Blackburn, who was acting in his interests. He was dressed in a flashy suit of plaid, and had a huge tiger-lily stuck jauntily in his buttonhole. His face was flushed, and his eyes sparkled. Now and then he would whisper something to one of his friends which would immediately be followed by a low gurgle of delight, which would be as promptly suppressed by the court.

The counsel for the plaintiff opened his case, with an impassioned appeal for the rights of a husband. Blackburn and his assistant waxed eloquent over the wrongs of their client, representing him as a patient and long-suffering man, who had endured much at the hands of a capricious wife. For eighteen months he had patiently borne the laughter and ridicule of his friends. But there comes a time when patience ceases to be a virtue, and that time had come for his client. He now demanded that the court compel his wife to live with him, as such. To this end he would call a witness who had known his client since childhood.

Jimmy Moore was called and testified to having known the plaintiff since childhood, and that he could swear that he was Mark Fanshaw.

Old Jake, the gardener at the Beeches, swore to having picked flowers for the plaintiff when he was "a wee bit lad," and was sure he could not be mistaken.

A number of others were examined, and all gave much the same evidence. They had all known the plaintiff since childhood, and were quite positive of his identity. Mark Fanshaw had a mole on his left cheek, so had the plaintiff. Mark Fanshaw had a peculiar-shaped scar on his right wrist, caused by falling upon a scythe. The plaintiff rolled back the cuff of his shirt and exhibited a like scar.

Mr. Blackburn smiled blandly at the jury, and the jury smiled blandly at Mr. Blackburn. "Was it really necessary to proceed further? Surely it was a pity to occupy the time of the court. The case in a nutshell was—the lady had quarreled with her husband. Being of a fickle mind, she had repented of her marriage when too late."

Counsel for the defense smiled also, but his was a weak smile of conscious defeat. He looked crestfallen and disappointed, and murmured something about being promised more conclusive evidence when he undertook the case.

Arthur Fanshaw rose, his face pale, but firm as a rock. He had a few minutes' whispered conversation with Grace's lawyer. That gentleman's face lost its weak look of conscious defeat, and at once grew animated and eager, and betrayed the keenest interest in what he heard. He rose quickly to his feet, and said:

"My lord, I have unexpectedly come into possession of most important evidence. New witnesses for the case have recently arrived. I must ask your lordship to allow them to be examined. We have heard the evidence of all the grocers and fiddlers, the riffraff and scum of the country. With your permission we will now hear the evidence of the witnesses I have spoken of. Later the court will have the opportunity of seeing the two men together, as the convict from Kingston has arrived, and is waiting in the courthouse to be summoned hither. The first witness to be examined, with your lordship's permission, will be Hope Fraser."

A murmur of surprise ran through the room. Then Hope was brought in. As she took the witness stand, her bosom heaved and her hands trembled. So much of her own pitiful life story would have to be laid bare to the world, in the story which she was about to tell.

After the usual formalities, the judge asked:

"Can you identify the plaintiff?"

"Yes, he is the son of Mrs. Heriot, who keeps a rooming-house in Hull."

A buzz of excitement ran through the room, and all eyes turned to where Heriot sat. His face had grown white and startled, and his eyes were riveted upon the face of the witness. Obtuse as he was, he understood what had occurred. In all his plotting he had never once thought that Arthur Fanshaw would jeopardize his own freedom to bring him down.

"Give us your reasons for saying that the plaintiff is the son of Mrs. Heriot," the judge demanded.

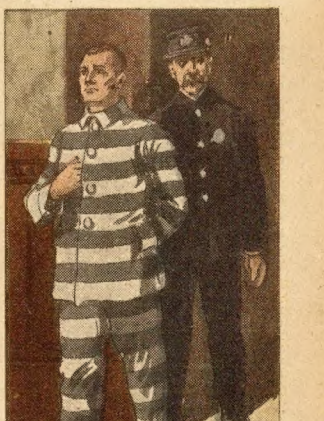
Hope proceeded to tell the story of that eventful night, slowly, tremblingly, at first, but as she proceeded she gained courage, and her tones were convincing and resolute. As the horrible tale was unraveled, Heriot looked sullen and reckless, but Arthur Fanshaw sat as calm and immovable as before.

During the recital the court had become so still one could have heard a pin drop. The people seemed scarcely to breathe, and the lawyers forgot to object. For a time they were held spellbound, dazed with surprise and incredulity. When Hope finished speaking, they all looked at one another helplessly, wondering if they had all been dreaming.

Heriot's lawyer made a pretense of cross-examining the witness, but her replies only strengthened the defendant's cause, so he ceased to question her further.

Arthur Fanshaw was put into the witness box, and, in a voice full and strong, he confirmed the girl's story.

The door opened, and a convict and his guard entered. Every eye was turned



His head was thrown back with a defiant gesture.

toward the man who wore the convict garb. His face was pale and rigid, but his eyes glittered resentfully. He was in his full manhood, but his hair was streaked with gray. His head was thrown back with a defiant gesture. His manner was that of a man who believed that every man's hand was against him, and whose hand was against every man.

He took one brief glance at Arthur Fanshaw, then turned his eyes away.

Grace trembled so she could neither move nor speak, and sank weakly into her mother's arms. One glance, however, had passed between herself and the convict, and that glance was full of trust and love.

The counsel for the defense asked Arthur Fanshaw to identify the prisoner.

"It is Mark Fanshaw, my father's eldest son," was the reply.

Counsel for the plaintiff interrupted.

"Did you not, at the trial that sent this man to Kingston, swear that he was not your brother, Mark Fanshaw?"

"I did."

"Did you also swear at the trial that the plaintiff was your brother?"

"I did."

"Then you were guilty of perjury, either at that trial or the present?"

"I was guilty of perjury at the former trial."

"Are you conscious that you are laying yourself liable to conviction on a serious offense?" the judge interposed.

"I am not unconscious of the enormity of my crime, your honor. I have signed a declaration of my guilt."

The judge seemed stunned, and murmured something about the cruelty of the crime and the punishment that would be sure to follow.

"I am asking for no mercy, your honor. I have made a voluntary confession, and I am prepared to take the consequences. The convict yonder is Mark Fanshaw, my own brother. Mark Heriot, the man who should wear the convict garb, is there," and he pointed to where Heriot sat sullenly beside Lawyer Blackburn.

For a moment silence fell upon the court. Two women entered. One was tall and angular, her face wrinkled and old, her hair white. She was Mrs. Heriot. The other wore the habit of a nun. She was Sister Rose.

Arthur Fanshaw spoke a few words in the ear of counsel for the defendant, who promptly rose and said:

"We have here two witnesses whose evidence must have a strong bearing on the case. One is the mother of Mark Fanshaw, the other the mother of Mark Heriot."

Amid a buzz of conversation the nun was placed in the witness box. The veil was thrown back, and showed a pale, troubled face.

"Tell us which of the two men is your son, Mrs. Fanshaw," counsel for the defense asked.

"They are both my sons," Sister Rose replied. "The one in convict garb is Mark Fanshaw, my son by my late husband, the other is Mark Thurlow, my son by an unhappy marriage with Robert Thurlow."

Heriot brought his fist down with a bang.

"It's a lie!" he shouted. "She is trumping up this story for the sake of that white-livered scoundrel yonder," indicating where Arthur Fanshaw stood. "There's the old woman, too, turning against me like hell!"

"For Heaven's sake be still!" Blackburn whispered in his ear.

The nun had left the witness box, and Mrs. Heriot was about to be put on the stand, when Mark Heriot swore some terrible oaths, and exclaimed:

"Its all up with us, Blackburn! Here, gentlemen, I'll confess the truth like a man, I will. I am Mark Heriot, I am, and that's straight."

"Let the sheriff take that man in charge," said the judge.

"Curse you!" shouted Heriot, shaking one fist at Arthur Fanshaw, and the other at Blackburn. "It was you two that led me into this!"

"Let Mr. Blackburn be apprehended, also," said the judge. "As for you, sir," turning to where Arthur Fanshaw stood, "I will see that you do not escape a well merited punishment."

Mark Fanshaw was liberated within the hour and restored to the home of his boyhood and the loving, steadfast heart of his wife.

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Arthur Fanshaw left the courtroom he looked neither to right nor left, but with bowed head turned his steps toward the little office in the mill yards. As he passed the groups of men and women talking excitedly on the streets, no human being took his hand and gave him a sympathetic word.

A woman dressed shabbily, but with the light of content upon her placid features, hugged a crowing youngster to her heart, and kissed it. For a moment his face grew soft and tender, at the picture, then it became cold and set again.

It was one of the weak moments in a strong life. It was nature demanding toll for his having alienated himself from all the love and affection of his kind. Nature always does exact a fee.

With head bowed Arthur went on. At the next corner a group of men stood. Among them were those he had called friends since earliest remembrance, but they did not recognize him now. With a grim smile he passed on and entered the office.

Old Nat brought Arthur Fanshaw's lunch as usual, but something in the pallid face of the man made him uneasy. The old man had dandled Arthur on his knee when a little lisping child, and was one of the few who would stand by him through all. The lunch stood on the table untouched, but the old man seemed loath to go.

Arthur Fanshaw lay back in an easy chair and watched the old man tidy up the room. The table was put in order, the books restored to their rightful places on the shelf. Arthur watched him with a cold, calculating eye.

"You're a happy man, Nat, he observed. "And you are a young man yet."

"Yes, sir, I am happy. Why shouldn't I be? I have always a job and I have never wanted for a bit or sup. God has been good to me, Mr. Arthur."

"And you will live for years to come yet."

"If it please God, I will. But my three score and ten are almost up. I will be seventy tomorrow."

"Seventy tomorrow, and still a young man," Arthur murmured, more to himself than his companion.

"You see, sir, I will soon be living on borrowed time; but I do not fear. God is good!" and the old face beamed with a holy light. Arthur Fanshaw shuddered.

"You have grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, have you not?"

"Yes, sir, I have, and thirty-four of them," was the proud reply. "And they are all lusty, and thrive well, thank the Lord!"

Several times the old man had risen to go, but each time the other would start some fresh topic of conversation. At last he understood that Arthur did not care to remain alone, and settled himself to remain.

As the hours dragged by, Arthur Fanshaw's face grew haggard and terrible. His cheeks were livid, his lips white and drawn, and in his eyes a restless fire glowed. It was surely the quenchless fire of remorse. The old man looked and shuddered. Many a time he had seen death written on a living face, but not like this. The face was grim and despairing, but not penitent.

Nat spoke of a doctor, but the other would not listen.

"A doctor could do me no good. He could not minister to a mind diseased. My ailment is not physical. It will soon pass," he murmured.

The old man stood the terrible strain for another hour.

"Perhaps you would not mind if I said a word of prayer?" he asked then, hesitatingly. "It all us helps me a deal."

"Pray away, Nat. I don't mind," he answered. "But it will do me no good."

"God is the great physician, sir. He can cure all sorts of diseases, if you only ax him. He would help you, I know."

A bitter laugh broke from Arthur Fanshaw's lips.

"What would you have me do, Nat? I thought you had a better opinion of me than that. I have served the devil all my life, Nat, and now when death is approaching, I can't offer God the tattered remnant of my life. God doesn't want the devil's leavings."

And again, a bitter laugh escaped him. The old man muttered something about the eleventh hour, but the other shook his head.

"I have reached the end of my rope, I can see the end of sin. But it does not matter," he said, bitterly.

Old Nathan Porter prayed fervently. In his rough, untutored way he prayed God to spare the soul of the little child he had dandled on his knee. Arthur Fanshaw listened gloomily, but his voice never once joined in the petition to the throne of God.

The little clock on the shelf chimed the hour of three. Arthur Fanshaw went to the door, and threw it open. The first faint streaks of the coming dawn were in the east. He stood framed in the doorway for a short time, then went to the table, took pen and paper and wrote rapidly for ten minutes. He folded the sheet carefully, and placed it in an envelope, sealing it with care. Then he drew from his finger a diamond ring, that sparkled in the lamplight, and laid it on the table. His gold watch and diamond studs were laid beside it. He looked at them long and thoughtfully. Old Nat began to get uneasy. Finally Arthur spoke:

"I have kept you a long time tonight, Nat, and you have been good enough to stay and bear me company, but I will not detain you longer. You will need some rest." He took up the glittering ring and held it in his hand. "I am going to give you this ring, Nat. It will insure you against want in your old days," he added, with a grim smile. "When you feel that you have labored long enough and need a rest, sell this ring. It will bring you five hundred dollars. It is worth more; don't let it go for less. The watch is yours, also. I want you to wear it as long as you live. When your time comes, give it to your children or your grandchildren's children." Again he smiled. "You will give this letter to Bennett, the foreman, at nine o'clock sharp. Then come to me here."

Old Nat stood looking dazed and incredulous, his lips parted to speak, but the other gently pushed him through the door.

"Good-by, Nat! Don't forget what I have said; and be sure and come here at nine o'clock, sharp," and the door closed, and the key grated in the lock.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Faithful to his word, Nat took the letter to the foreman at nine the next morning. Bennett opened it immediately. He was just thinking of going to the office to see Arthur Fanshaw. The letter was short and mysterious.

"When you read this, Bennett, you will be working for another master. You have always been faithful and for that I thank you. Come to the office with Nat Porter, and all will be explained. Yours with regrets,

"ARTHUR FANSHAW."

"What does it mean, Nat? Have you seen the master this morning?"

"Not since three o'clock, sir. I stayed the night with him and he was mighty queer, I own. I am afraid the trouble and disgrace have queered his mind," the old man replied.

Bennett struck off at a brisk walk, and old Nat followed close behind.

The office blinds were drawn and the door closed. Bennett rapped loudly, but there was no response. Then he tried the door. It was unlocked, and he entered. On the table the lamp still burned, and on the couch lay Arthur Fanshaw. Bennett thought him sleeping at first, but something in the expression of the face chilled him. He raised the blinds and crossed to the couch. It was Arthur Fanshaw, not sleeping, but dead. He had died as he predicted, on the fifteenth of September.

* * * * *

Within a month Heriot and Blackburn were tried and sentenced. Heriot received a sentence of seven years for impersonation, while Blackburn got three years for conspiracy.

The remains of Arthur Fanshaw were laid to rest in the graveyard beside his father.

There was no inquest. The doctor who had been called declared death to be due to heart failure. There were no signs of violence about the body, but there were those who thought that death did not come unsought.

There were very few to follow Arthur Fanshaw to the grave, and in the whole world there was only one to shed a regretful tear over his grave, and that was the one he had wronged most cruelly, Hope Fraser. Despite the wrong she had suffered at his hands, she loved him still.

Every Sabbath morning she brought fresh flowers and placed them on his grave and that of little Artie.

A year later they laid Hope to rest beside her child. The doctors said the girl died of no disease. From the hour that her child had died, she had wilted away like a flower. Poor child! she had not the strength to cope with the world and live. Her brief life had been overshadowed with a sorrow that dragged her to the grave.

The End.

Diamond Cut Diamond.

Andrew D. White stated recently that murder in America was a safer pursuit than hunting—that only one in a hundred murderers is hanged.

"Our morality, so far as the treatment of murder is concerned," said Mr. White the other day in New York, "seems to me as loose as the morality of the guests at the Balkan ball.

"It is said that at a ball in the Balkans a guest complained to the host, a divine, that another guest, a judge, had stolen his watch.

"'Which judge was it?' the divine asked, frowning.

"The guest pointed out a distinguished looking jurist with gray hair, and, an hour or so later, the divine returned his watch to him. Thrusting it back into his pocket with a contented sigh, the guest asked:

"'And what did the judge have to say for himself?'

"'Ssh!' said the divine. 'He doesn't know I've got it back.'"

Prof. Spoof—I wrapped tissue paper around my tobacco seeds, planted them and had perfect cigarettes come up.

Bold Man—Ever try wrapping woolen rags around the seed to grow clear Havanas?

Decidedly Handicapped.

Aunt Nancy—Think of studyin' to be a doctor, eh? Don't you do it.

Young Man—Why not, aunty?

Aunt Nancy—You can't git no practice till ye git married, an' ye can't git married till ye git practice, that's why.

Her Picture.

"Next to pure reading matter" is the affinity of all advertising men, and here is an instance of the advertiser getting what he wanted, but somebody else didn't. A young woman had announced her engagement, and great care had been taken with the cut for the paper. When the edition came off the picture looked swell. A big "ad" was "next" to the "women's stuff." The paper had been off an hour or two when the society editor's 'phone rang. Said the voice:

"You have printed my picture today, and I think it is perfectly awful. Can't you please take it out of the paper?"

The society editor hurriedly turned to the page to see if the name was wrong. No, the name was right, and the cut looked great. She asked the girl over the 'phone what the matter was.

"Why, look at that advertisement on top of it."

Then the society editor read: "——— corsets; for correctness of form and snugness of fit see below."

And the young woman kicked after bringing in her picture herself.

The English Cub Reporter.

Mathias Shalek of New York recently celebrated his ninety-ninth birthday and the seventy-ninth anniversary of his wedding.

Time has not dulled the edge of Mr. Shalek's wit, and to a reporter who asked him if his lifelong and moderate use of tobacco and alcohol had injured him, he replied: "It's too early to tell yet."

Mr. Shalek then said that America's unexampled prosperity was in his opinion due to the unexampled skill in his trade, or profession or business of the American man.

"Take, for example, reporters," he continued. "Our reporters are clever. None of them are like the English reporter who was sent to report the wedding of the musical comedy actress the other day.

"The reporter, on his return from the church, sat down at his desk, lit his pipe, and began to read a novel.

"'Here,' said a sub-editor, 'here, why don't you write that wedding story?'

"'Nothing doing,' the reporter answered, with a yawn. 'Bride never turned up. So there's nothing to write.'"

Whose Little Boy?

An iron hoop bounded through the area railings of a suburban house and played havoc with the kitchen window. The woman waited, anger in her eyes, for the appearance of the hoop's owner. Presently he came.

"Please, I've broken your window," he said, "and here's father to mend it."

And sure enough, he was followed by a stolid-looking workman, who at once started to work, while the small boy took his hoop and ran off.

"That'll be four bits, ma'am," announced the glazier when the window was whole once more.

"Four bits!" gasped the woman. "But your little boy broke it—the little fellow with the hoop, you know. You're his father, aren't you?"

The stolid man shook his head.

"Don't know him from Adam," he said. "He came around to my place and told me his mother wanted her winder fixed. You're his mother, aren't you!"

And the woman shook her head also.

Too Much Pronunciation.

Senator Tillman piloted a constituent through the Capitol one day, and, after showing him the sights, led him in to the public gallery of the Senate. After about an hour had expired, the visitor went up to the gallery doorkeeper, and exclaimed:

"My name is Swate. I am a friend of Senator Tillman's, and he brought me here. I thought I would tell you this so that I could get back into the gallery after I have my lunch."

"That's all right," said the doorkeeper, who was a solemn and impressive person. "But I may not be here when you get back. In order to prevent any mistake, I will give you the password, which will entitle you to admission."

Mr. Swate's eyes bulged out at this, and he seemed astonished.

"What's the word?" he asked.

"Idiosyncrasy."

"What?"

"Idiosyncrasy."

"I guess I'll stay in," said Swate.

Distinction Explained.

Mrs. J. G. Phelps Stokes (Rose Pastor) said in a recent address in New York, apropos of certain dishonest financial methods:

"They tell a story about a man of this type. It appears that, as he got out of his motor car one day, a thief snatched his silk handkerchief from the pocket of his sable-lined overcoat. The millionaire grabbed the thief and looked around for a police officer. Then the thief, squirming in his grasp, said:

"'Ah, let me go! Come on now, let me go. After all, boss, the only difference between you and me is that you're makin' your sixth or seventh million while I'm still workin' on my first.'"

Fetters of Guilt

By Will Lisenbee

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Begun in No. 20, May 18. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XIV.
THE GROCER'S THEORY.

DENNIS QUIGLEY and Paul Darrell exchanged glances of surprise and amazement. To tell the truth, neither of them had for even a moment suspected the landlord of the Black Bear. But the words spoken by the storekeeper startled them. Could it be possible, they reasoned, that the landlord could have committed the deed, and then, to divert suspicion into another channel, had invented Robert Smith and the negro? No; that could hardly be. Quigley was the first to speak.

"Really, I don't think any one has suspected the landlord of the Black Bear of committing the crime," he said. "But your suggestion opened up something to think about. We can't always tell who is guilty. Mr. Bastwell is not the man to commit a murder, if I am any judge, but one thing is not to be lost sight of; to kill a man is not always to murder. There may be provocations of which we know nothing, or the deed may have been committed in self-defense, and then concealed out of fear that the justification of the act could not be proved. So it may happen that a person may be guilty of a deed that looks like murder, and still be innocent of that crime."

"I can see where you are right," agreed the storekeeper. "But I don't say that the landlord had anything to do with the crime. I merely asked if any one had suspected him."

"Oh, we understand that," said Darrell.

A few minutes later the two drove away.

"Where shall we go?" asked Darrell.

"To the Sky Springs," answered Quigley.

"You believe we shall find our man hiding there?" asked Darrell.

"I am sure of it."

"So am I. You think it was he who came for the provisions?"

"Who else?"

"Who else, indeed? But there is a bare possibility——"

"Of what?"

"Has it never occurred to you that this man we are on the track of may not have had anything to do with the affair at the Inn?"

"It might be possible, yet it is not probable."

"You heard what Merrill said?"

"About what?"

"The man who had come into possession of the Sky Springs House?"

"Yes."

"It has just occurred to me that it might be this Samuel Potter, who has come to inspect his property."

"It may be," nodded Quigley.

"And in that case," pursued Darrell, "all our theories regarding his connection with the tragedy must go up in smoke."

"Not necessarily."

Darrell laughed.

"You have a vivid imagination if you could connect him with the case," he declared.

"It may not be all imagination," corrected Quigley.

"But what reasons have you for connecting him with the case?"

"Just at present I am not at liberty to tell," replied Quigley. "Mind, I don't say that this man Potter was connected with the crime, but there is a possibility that he may know something about it."

"Where did you get your information?"

"As to that," replied Quigley, "I hardly think I would be justified in saying.

"Oh, very well, if you wish to be secretive," commented Darrell, "I shall not press the point."

The sun had set when they reached the summit of the mountain and turned into the dim road that led to the Sky Springs. The road was steep and gashed by rain-washed gullies that threatened to upset the buggy. And as the dusk deepened they found it expedient to abandon the vehicle, and after hitching the horse, they proceeded down the slope on foot.

It was a gloomy structure—the Sky Springs House—looming black and forbidding against the faint glow that still lingered in the western sky. There was no light visible to tell of any occupancy, and a silence like that of the grave pervaded the place.

The grounds which had once been planted with shrubbery and flowers were now overgrown with a rank growth of weeds and wild creepers which invaded the very building itself. It all made a desolate picture in the fast-deepening darkness, and Quigley and Darrell, standing there in silence, were convinced of the failure of their visit to the lonely place. But they did not relinquish all hope. There might be some one about the old building, and it was their intention to satisfy their minds as to this before quitting the precincts.

If they could have arrived before nightfall, they might easily have discovered tracks about the place, if the building had had an occupant recently, but in the darkness such signs, if they existed, might escape their notice.

They were careful to make no sound that might reach the ears of any one who might be inside the house, and when they spoke it was in whispers. They realized now that they had committed a very stupid oversight. They had brought with them no means of providing a light. To grope their way through the darkened house in search of one who might be a murderer, and who might not hesitate to add another victim to the list in order to escape capture, was not a situation to contemplate with pleasure. They were provided with matches, however, and it was barely possible that a lamp of some sort might be found within. But first of all, they would wait a while. If the house had an occupant, it was more than likely that he would soon make his presence known in some way.

Dennis Quigley and Paul Darrell, though not lacking in courage, realized the necessity of caution. They must act with judgment and discretion. They held a whispered consultation, and it was decided that they should keep watch for a short time before entering the house—one from the east and the other from the west side. Quigley took a position in the shadows of some shrubbery on the east side, while Darrell stealthily disappeared to take up a position on the opposite side.

By this time the moon had risen, and the beams, filtering through the thick foliage, threw filigrees of silvery light among the black shadows. The minutes dragged slowly. The incessant notes of innumerable insects vibrated on the scented air. The plaintive cry of a whip-poor-will rose from the black shadows down the slope, but in the dark and gloomy building there appeared no sign of life.

CHAPTER XV.
AT SKY SPRINGS HOUSE.

Five, ten minutes passed, and still no sign of life appeared in the silent house. It was just occurring to Quigley that they had come on a fool's errand, when a slight sound coming from the direction of the wide porch attracted his attention. In a moment he was alert and watchful. He bent his gaze eagerly toward the porch, and at the same instant a dark shadow moved swiftly into view. As it slipped noiselessly from the porch, it resolved itself into the slender figure of a woman!

Amazed, Quigley stood as silent as the shadows about him. The figure glided swiftly across the open space and swept into a path leading past the spot where he stood. Who was she? What could she be doing there alone, and at that hour? The questions flitted quickly through Quigley's mind.

As she passed the moonlight, struggling through the branches of the trees, fell full upon her face. Dennis Quigley caught his breath with a jerk. In that brief glance he had recognized her. It was Miss Simmons!

"Good, God!" he gasped under his breath, "can it possibly be?" The next instant she had glided past him and fairly ran up the slope.

With noiseless steps he followed. For a hundred yards she continued her rapid pace; then she turned quickly aside into a dim path among the trees. For a moment Quigley lost sight of her. He quickened his steps and fairly ran along the dark path. It required great caution to avoid running into some of the stunted bushes that grew along the path.

As he entered the dark shadows of a thick clump of bushes, he again caught sight of the strange woman, nearly a hundred yards ahead, as she was crossing an open space among the trees. He now realized that unless he quickened his steps and drew nearer to her, she would again disappear from sight and be lost among the trees beyond the open space. He realized that to increase his speed would, in all probability result in revealing his presence, but there was no other course to pursue.

It was Miss Simmons!

He felt a sense of guilt at the thought of dogging her steps, but he argued that his course was justifiable under the circumstances. He had no thought of prying into her private affairs, nor would he have followed her had she not been alone, and might, as he thought, be in need of a protector.

Mr. Huddleson, it occurred to him, might have accompanied her to the place and might be in waiting near-by, in which case he would quietly retire without making his presence known. But if it proved that she was alone, he was determined that she should not cross the mountain without a protector.

He hurried forward, crossed the open space, and plunged into the grove of oaks that was threaded by a narrow path. He had taken less than a dozen steps when he stopped abruptly. Directly in front of him stood the girl. She had turned, and a half-smothered gasp of terror came from her lips. She was half revealed by the pale light of the moon that filtered through the branches of the trees.

Dennis Quigley stood before her with uncovered head.

"I beg a theusand pardons," he said. "I hope I did not startle you, Miss Simmons."

She stood leaning against the trunk of a tree, her slender form flecked with the wavering light of the moon.

"Who are you?" she asked, "and why are you following me?"

There was a slight quaver in her voice that told of fear.

"My name is Quigley—Dennis Quigley," responded the reporter, "and I hope you have not forgotten my visit to your home yesterday. I saw you here alone, unprotected. Could I do less than offer you my protection?"

As he ceased, he thought he detected the faintest sigh of relief.

"I—I did not recognize you in the darkness," she said. There was still a quaver in her voice that told of agitation.

"But—I do not need your protection," she added.

"But you are alone," persisted Quigley. "This is a wild and unsettled region. I implore you to allow me to accompany you."

She was silent for a moment. Then she made a quick gesture with her hand.

"You followed me here?" she said.

"I had not the faintest idea that you were here when I came," he replied. "I give you my word of honor."

Her face was as pale as the moonbeams that fell upon it.

"Then what are you doing here?" she asked abruptly.

"To explain would be a long story," he said. "One that would in no way have any connection with yourself."

"Then you will not tell me?"

She flung him a quick, inquiring glance.

"I have not said I would not," he replied.

"Then you will tell me?"

"If you think it will interest you?"

"I have asked you."

"I would avoid it if I could. It is not a pleasant subject."

"No matter."

"It is something relating to the unfortunate affair at the Black Bear Inn," Quigley answered.

She was visibly startled at his words.

"You are a detective, then?"

Her voice sank almost to a whisper.

"Only for the present," Quigley explained. "I am a reporter who is trying to get at the truth of this strange affair."

"And that is what brought you here?"

"Yes."

"Why have you come here? What has this deserted house got to do with the case?" she asked.

"I expected to find some one here who is connected with it."

"And have you found that person?"

"I have not."

"Have you been in the house?"

"Not yet."

"You have some one with you?"

"Yes."

"An officer?" she asked.

"No, a friend who is an amateur detective."

"Whom do you expect to find in the house?"

"A man who was seen in the company of Mortimer Dent at his camp on Willow Creek," replied Quigley.

"What reason have you to believe you will find him there?" the girl asked.

"We believe he was seen coming in this direction."

"Is that all the reason?"

"It is the most important."

"Do you expect to find the man who killed Mortimer Dent there?" she asked.

"Possibly."

"And if I told you that you would not find him there would you still enter the house?"

"I might."

"If I asked you not, would you?"

She stood watching him eagerly.

CHAPTER XVI.
PERPLEXED.

The question startled Quigley and sent his mind in a dizzy whirl. Why did she wish him not to enter the house?

Like a flash there came to his mind something that startled him. He remembered the hat Huddleson wore when he met him at the creek—the same hat that had been worn by the mysterious Robert Smith on the night of the murder at the inn. He felt that the girl standing before him had, in some way, become involved in the tragic affair. In addition to what he had previously discovered, her presence at the Sky Springs at this unusual hour contributed to corroborate the belief. Yet, not for an instant could be associate her in any way with any evil intent. But that she had become mixed up in the affair, he was fully convinced.

But why did she not want him to enter the house? Was there some one there whom she did not wish to be discovered? These thoughts flashed through the mind of Dennis Quigley and filled him with a vague perplexity.

"You have not answered my question," she said.

"If you should ask me not to enter the house I should feel constrained to obey you," he replied.

"Thank you," she murmured. "Then I ask you."

"You will not tell me why?"

"I cannot tell you."

"You mean you will not?" corrected Quigley.

"I should rather not," she said. "But I am willing to tell you something you may want to know."

(Continued on page fourteen.)

The Detective Barrier;

Or, HOW AND WHY

By WM. H. MANNING

It was a woman.

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Begun in No. 21, May 25. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.
WHAT BARFORD HEARD.

BARFORD was glad he was on the trellis. He was not having his labor for nothing, and every word that floated to his hearing was valuable. It was no longer possible to acquit Docia Lettington of knowledge of certain recent events, though she had not as yet incriminated herself in the actual killing of Harden Kendall. He was ready to wait for the fatal admission, but Varrick's voice sounded warningly.

"Hush, hush! Pray speak in a lower tone. Voices may carry dangerously, and we don't want our secrets known to the world that is——"

"Grasping to learn who murdered Kendall!" she broke in.

"Just so! In this wretched crisis it is our policy to eliminate ourselves as much as we can, and hope that luck will do the rest. Let us remember that Kendall was killed——"

Taking his own advice to heart Varrick dropped his voice until the succeeding words were a mere murmur. After that what he said was only occasionally audible, but Docia was overwrought and rarely succeeded in preventing the keen note that came so clearly to the listening detective.

"Harden Kendall," she resumed, after the murmur of Varrick's voice ended, "tempted fate and lost his life. He was too rash to remember that he might go far enough to pass endurance. How could I do otherwise than as I did? I had so much at stake! I had to protect——"

The masculine murmur interrupted.

"I am barely speaking above a whisper," said Docia, irritably. "Do let me talk! I want to know what to do? What has become of it?"

"My advice is that you give up all thought of it," declared Varrick, raising his voice.

"I will not!" she exclaimed. "It shall be found."

"Kendall may have destroyed it."

"No such good luck as that. He wanted his revenge too much. When I refused his offer he was very—yes, yes, Roland. I will speak low. But I must find it, I simply must. Suppose they learn who killed Kendall and then find it?"

Barford bent his brows in a deeply meditative frown. What was the object so often referred to as "it"?

"It is a time for rapid action," Docia asserted.

Again the obscure masculine murmur.

"I don't see how I shall betray myself," she persisted. "I am not under suspicion, and I can act quickly and secure it before——"

The murmur was of hasty speech.

"How can the detectives see all that is done here?" she demanded pettishly. "They are not omnipresent, and I am a woman. I'll back a woman's wits against all the detectives in the State. Just see how it is thus far. They have been in town all day, they have questioned and pried into things right and left, but nobody has been near me, and not an inquisitive glance has been given to my house. Doesn't that prove that they are unsuspicious?"

"It would be a very poor detective that would shout his views from the hilltops," interrupted Varrick. "Besides, ignorance, today, may be followed by direct knowledge tomorrow."

"I have no fear—except of one thing."

"What's that?"

"I really am afraid of Kendall's housekeeper. She was bitterly jealous of me, having seen so much. She wanted him so badly that she imagined she had a mortgage upon him, and when she saw him with me so often she just sent fire from her eyes at me. If she tells——"

The murmur sounded very softly, after which she continued.

"You don't know the woman, Roland. She hated me, and she will guess."

There was a stir directly above Barford, and the window closed with unnecessary violence. Plainly, Varrick was annoyed because Docia failed to moderate her voice, and he had taken a way to prevent mischief. The way was good, but tardy. As he was the cooler of the two he had erred in judgment far more than the agitated girl: the window should have been closed at the beginning.

Barford was beaten. Not another word could he hear from where he was, and he could rise no higher without breaking the delicate upper part of the trellis. Convinced, at last, that his chance was gone he moved down softly and, going a couple of rods away, was joined by Netley. "Heard anything?" the latter asked anxiously.

His companion looked at him and smiled grimly.

"Enough to remind me that persons have been hanged for murder before now, and enough to convince me that one cannot see through a rock."

"I think I follow you."

"I wish I could follow those individuals upstairs. Listen, Netley! It's a hard conversation to repeat, but I'll make my best try."

He tried, and then both officers stood silent. After a time Netley carried a hand to his chin and rubbed hard.

"A glossary is needed," he grumbled.

"Or a mind-reader," Barford returned. "Think it over, Netley. Where do we stand? Let us see if we can piece the broken sentences together so as to get sense out of them. Item one, there was something between Miss Docia and Harden Kendall, and Martha Belden was jealous."

"Jealous women do lots of mischief."

"If we confine ourselves to what I've overheard we must drop Martha, except as a woman who can tell things. Let me resume. Item two, the persons in yonder room never expressed wonder as to who killed Kendall, from which we may see they know, or believe they do."

"Granted!"

"Item three, Docia says Kendall passed the point of endurance and she wants to know how she could do otherwise than as she did."

"Looks bad for Docia."

"Item four, Docia refused Kendall's offer—I wonder what offer?—and then, or before, or after, Kendall wanted revenge. On whom? Docia?"

"What he got was something else."

"Netley, I need of study before I say more on this point. As the various speeches entwine they make a strong case against the girl, but they are vague."

"She didn't really say she killed Kendall."

"Would she be so rash?"

"Did she express pity for him?"

"Not while I was listening."

"Knowing your way, I don't advise precipitation, but you would be justified in seeking an interview with her, and, if she failed to speak right out, in arresting her. Plainly, she knows who did the act. Unless she is an accessory before or after the fact, why doesn't she speak?"

"That's a bad point against Docia. A man lies murdered, and a girl who believes she knows who did the deed holds herself silent. But let us drop that for now. What puzzles me vastly is the nature of that thing so often referred to as 'it.' What is 'it'? Docia wants to find something desperately. Varrick advises against the attempt as dangerous, but she is resolved. 'It' must be found. Query: What must be found?"

"Don't ask me!" grumbled Netley, disconsolately.

"I have the impression that the death of Kendall did Docia but little good. Innocent or guilty, his going out of life left her disappointed in some way. Something important is missing. Her wish to find it probably means a desire to destroy it. That is good for us."

"In what way?"

"Unless Varrick prevails over her purpose she is likely to make a false step to get the article."

"They usually do, those criminals. Step out, Docia, and make yours."

Barford fell into thought and gave no heed to what Netley was saying, so they stood some minutes in silence. They were aroused by the opening of the door. Docia came out, and, without a glance around her, hurried away. They followed at a prudent distance, and, as they expected, finally saw her enter her own house.

Satisfied that they had no more to do that night they turned toward their hotel, but had not reached it when sight of a man who was skulking along the street in the darkest shadows attracted their attention.

"Somebody else with evil designs?" questioned Barford."

"Why, that's our esteemed rival, Mr. Detective Thomson."

It was that gentleman, but they quickly discovered more. Under his arm he carried a burden clumsily wrapped in his coat, and though he may have believed he was exceedingly sagacious, it was of a nature that defied absolute secrecy.

"It's a rifle," said Netley.

"Unless it is very short, no."

"What do you call it?"

"There you have me. A long, rather slender thing, but hidden by the coat—and Thomson means to keep it hidden. Netley, Mr. Thomson has found something he thinks valuable."

"Connected with the case."

"Yes. Having found it he means to do the subterranean act, his idea probably being to prevent us from sharing his secret. That's his right, of course. I wonder what he's found?"

Thomson was receding, and he took his prize and his secret with him. His rivals returned to their hotel, where Barford declined further discussion, that night, and they were soon in bed.

Barford lay for some time in deep thought, and the point that interested him most was Docia's reference to an offer from Kendall that she had refused. He wondered what kind of an offer. Was it martimonial? Had she declined to be his wife?

"If so," he muttered, "the fact does not fit into the same groove with Miss Martha Belden's claim that Docia flung herself at Kendall's head. If Docia wanted to marry the man, why should she reject his offer? Again, she says Kendall wanted his revenge. Also, that she could not do different from what she did. Docia does not seem to stand in a mellow radiance of the light of established innocence."

The detective turned in bed, snuggled his head down on the pillow and went to sleep.

CHAPTER VIII.
WHERE KENDALL WAS.

Barford slept unusually late, and when he was dressing Netley knocked at the door and, being admitted, came in looking rosy and well satisfied.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard, and be wise," he exclaimed gayly.

"I wouldn't for the world comment on your low station by calling you an ant," replied Barford, smiling, "but when it comes to wisdom——"

"Then I'm all there. I throb with wisdom and activity. Been abroad!"

"Netley, you have something to say. Out with it!"

"I took a walk," that gentleman explained. "Few persons were visibly astir, and they were mostly men puttering in gardens, or around stables, and so on. I made acquaintance with a man who was washing a carriage outside his buildings, and I tried to be the genial chap with a cigar and an irruption of amiable words. I was after pay ore, and I struck it. Barford, Miss Martha Belden did not tell the truth when she said she never saw Kendall after breakfast the day he was killed."

"Well?"

"My man was a cab-driver. He knew me by sight, and soon brought conversation to the point of interest. He had occasionally driven Mr. Kendall to or from the sub-village on the branch road, a mile east of here, and liked him because he was a sociable and fairly generous man. He was sorry for the death, and this is about how he expressed himself, further on.

"He was at the village on the branch road on the day before yesterday, having carried a customer over to take the two thirty-five train, and Harden Kendall, having come down by that train, rode home with him. They had reached this village, and were on the street at the rear of Kendall's house, when a stranger hailed the driver and wanted to be driven to the house of a gentleman farmer south of here. Kendall had been in ill humor all the way, but he became accommodating when he heard this, and told Rich—the driver—he would get out right there and enter his premises at the rear, and he immediately scrambled out.

"The stranger had a valise at the depot, and Rich drove him there and got it. Returning, he had view of Kendall's home as he drove past. Barford, he says that Kendall was standing on the back steps with Martha Belden."

"At what time?"

"About three-thirty, afternoon."

"And Martha told us she did not see Kendall after breakfast!"

"Yes."

"Mistakes are often made, and the human memory is strangely unreliable at times, but this was not a case of that sort. Kendall's death would bring every fact back vividly. Miss Belden deliberately lied to us."

"Relying upon the fact that Kendall had come home by the rear of his lot. Probably he left the same way, so she hoped he was not seen. Her lie was hazardous, but she risked it."

"Why should she lie about such a matter?"

"Perhaps it was because her red-haired sister was with her!" said Netley swiftly.

"With her when?"

"When the cab-driver saw her and Kendall on the back steps."

"Did Rich say he saw the three of them together?"

"He said so, and in a way too natural to be doubted. Clearly, he did not suspect he was making trouble for anybody, and his talk was the idle talk of one who had lost a customer and friend by death and felt sorry. Now, then, observe the identity of the trio on the steps—Kendall, Martha, and, last but not least, her red-headed sister, Dorcas. Memorandum: that Kendall died with a lock of red hair in his hand."

"What was the mood of the three?"

"I tried to get it out of Rich without seeming to care, but he did not enlighten me greatly. How the sisters looked he could not tell at that distance, and how they were acting he did not seem to observe. He did say, though, that he reckoned Kendall had troublesome business on his mind, for he was acting even more irritable than when riding home."

Barford took a short turn across the room, pacing slowly, his head bent and his eyes on the floor.

"Miss Belden lied!" he muttered thoughtfully.

"And her sister has red hair," Netley reminded.

"For that matter, so has Docia Lettington's servant, and five other women in town follow suit. Netley, let's go to breakfast."

It was a silent meal. Barford ate mechanically, rarely raising his eyes from his plate, and Netley permitted him to have his fill of meditation, as well as of food. Afterward they went outside and, without immediate explanation, the chief led the way toward the west woods. Only then did he break silence.

"There has been an event here that included more than the criminal. Docia and Miss Belden were both identified with the event. I need hardly add that Kendall was, also. Take heed to the common interest in that shack up yonder. Martha went there, and Docia, if not there in person, was represented by her ally, Varrick. He went there——"

"In his stocking feet. And the person who killed Kendall left no tracks."

"Don't go too fast, Netley. Let me finish. Piecing together what we have we see that Harden Kendall was a storm center. Martha wanted him, while Docia declined some offer of his. We have got to consider both women as being mixed up in the mystery."

"And they don't love each other a bit."

"No. Now, our most pressing, most mysterious puzzle is, what's the secret of the shack? A man was there, and a woman who was not either Docia or Martha, but a woman with feet you are pleased to call stumpy. She was well below Docia and Martha in the social scale, for stumpy feet go with stumpy lives. Call her a laboring woman. Who was she? What man was with her? Why did they chase the other person through the woods and to the village, right across the freshly-plowed field? And what has become of them now?"

Netley shook his head in silence. Barford, saying no more on the subject, was eying the ground.

"Here's a new trail," he presently added, more cheerfully. "It's Detective Thomson's. I admit I'm mightily curious to know what he took to the village so secretly, and where he got it. Granted that this is his trail of that occasion, and I'm sure it was not here yesterday, we may learn something."

There was difficulty in back-tracking the man, but they persevered and were nearly at the shack when the trail was broken. Barford took heed and moved again, this time to a thicket by the way. Pushing aside the lower leaves he looked into the niche thus revealed. He was busy for some time, and then he stood erect with vexation plainly stamped on his face.

"Thomson has found something here. It was hidden, and he got it. The ground gives absolutely no clew as to its nature——"

"Looked to me like a rifle, as he toted it along with him."

"Rather short for a rifle, but it may be. Doctor Brown will have it that Kendall was shot with such a weapon."

"In spite of the fact that nobody heard the shot, not even our man who was sitting up with a sick child."

"Was it a rifle, revolver or—that 'or' is a big word, in this instance. Never mind the weapon for now. Thomson found something here and has scored one on us. I should have search d wider, but it may not be too late. Come on!"

They went, first visiting the shack, where Barford proceeded to make an examination even more critical than that of the day before. The earthen floor, the walls, and the few trivial movables were alike subjected to the sharpest scrutiny, but it was the bed of pine branches that particularly interested the searcher. He wanted to learn the color of the hair of those who had slept there, and sight of a red hair would have delighted him, but Netley, watching, knew that he had made no progress when he abandoned work. Then Barford stood erect, looking about him.

"The shack is absolutely dumb," he finally admitted, regretfully, "and I suppose there is no more to be learned here. But, Netley, I put myself on record with one statement. It was the coming to town of the unknown man and woman who stopped here that led to Kendall's death!"

"How do you make that out?"

"Because it's certain they had some share in it, though not necessarily a guilty one. Remember how Roland Varrick came here. Remember that Martha Belden came. The trouble may have been brewing long before, but the unknown pair precipitated it."

"And the man of the mysterious pair killed Kendall."

"What is your proof?"

"There you have me, and I cave in. You're boss, Barford, and it's for you to unravel things."

"One thing I'll do, and that is to have a good man on the trail of the man and the stumpy-footed woman. First, I want to know whether they came to Grandon on foot or by team. Come!"

The search was made, first in the more open part of the woods, and then along the road at their west side, but no horse-tracks and no wheel-marks were discovered except in their legitimate place, the middle of the road. Something else was found in the road, after long search. Travel had obliterated a good deal, but a double trail led north in the very center of the public way. Distinguishable footprints were often separated by a full rod, but there was proof that the stumpy-footed woman had gone away accompanied by a man, and the tracks of the latter were those of the woman's companion in the old shanty.

After the habit of a certain class of persons they had walked in the middle of the road, and had stepped long and, perhaps, rapidly.

"We need a third detective now," said Barford. "I'll telegraph to headquarters and have somebody on that job. We have work to do here. Perhaps by the time our ally has found the strange couple we will also be done."

Leaving the road they started back to the village, but Barford was always alert. If there were more signs he wanted to see them.

"By the way," said Netley, "you remember that Kendall's last trail showed that when he was a few rods short of where he was shot down he paused briefly, looked toward the south, and then went on. We have not hunted that land southward."

"When you have an off day, hunt," replied Barford, smiling. "I shall waste no time there. I grant that he heard something, or was looking for something, but we need not speculate. The fatal shot came from the opposite quarter, and—"

"Hush!"

"What now?"

"Look!"

Barford looked, and he saw Thomson on the lower limbs of a tree, industriously digging away with a knife at the bark. They moved forward briskly, and were presently discovered by their detective rival. He gave them a side glance, flung hard at the tree and wrenched something clear that he covered with his hand.

"Found it, have you?" asked Barford.

"Found what?" asked Thomson, curtly.

"The bullet that killed Harden Kendall."

"Since you have seen so much I don't mind admitting that I have, but you can hardly expect me to exhibit it. I know the size of it, and you don't. Trade secret now."

Netley swallowed audibly and disgustedly growled:

"Confound that fellow! This is his second discovery, and it seems to me he is running us a hard race. That bullet will tell a plain tale, and we shall not be the ones to read it."

CHAPTER IX.
AFRAID!

Thomson descended from the tree with the bullet in his pocket and his face aglow with satisfaction. He was far from being a mean fellow, but he liked to succeed, and was elated because he had scored a point over his rival. Yet, being inclined to harbor some pity, too, he stayed long enough to talk very amicably about the death of Kendall, and then walked toward the village.

"I had a good mind," growled Netley, "to take that lump of lead away from him by force."

"Why?" Barford asked, calmly.

"To get evidence for our side."

"Oh!" said Barford, simply, and then stood looking from the bullet-wounded tree back to the ground where Kendall fell. After a short time he smiled slightly. "Netley," he added, "be a good chap and climb up to where Thomson dug, will you?"

Netley ascended and gazed at the scarred trunk as if hoping other secrets would leap out.

"Now," pursued Barford, quietly, "look back to the cliff where the assassin must have stood and tell me what line of flight that bullet took, after stopping to kill Kendall."

Netley looked, and then turned a puzzled face downward.

"Why, say, I don't see how it could be. Kendall stood on ground lower than where his slayer must have been, and yet the part of this tree where I am is higher than Kendall's falling place."

"Then," pursued Barford, grimly, "that remarkable bullet, instead of following a direct line or gradually falling, dipped down when it reached Kendall, killed him, and then rose like a bird into this tree. In other words, its flight was that of a crescent, eh?"

"Oh, suffering Vidocq!" exclaimed Netley, "that wasn't the bullet that did the work. Rise like that? Never! Climb a tree like a cat? Hardly!"

"I knew what you would discover, Netley. Thomson's supposed triumph upset me for a minute, but I soon saw that his bullet was too high up to fit the case. Thomson is no fool, and might have learned his own error had we left him alone, but our arrival diverted his attention from business. Come down! We will ourselves search again for that lost lead that killed Kendall."

"Ten thousand dollars to his housekeeper, Martha Belden."

They searched, even crossing the road and exploring the trees beyond, but did not find the desired bullet. No tree was wounded, and they finally arrived again at the decision that the missile had found lodgment in the earth at some point and was hopelessly lost.

Returning, Barford located Constable Carter and asked a question that had been haunting him constantly.

"Can you suggest anybody who is likely to have wandered in the woods yonder, so as to tell me who has been hiding in the far shanty of the lot up that way?"

"Hiding?" repeated the constable, puzzled. "When?"

"Within the last few days."

"I can tell you that, myself. Nobody has been hiding there, though some of the village boys, my own included, have been doing what they called camping there."

"Boys? When?"

"Oh! in the last few days. It was their fancy to make believe they were roughing it. They made little use of the shack, for they wanted outdoor life, but they did cut pine boughs, make a bed and lie on it a trifle. I was passing and saw all that, myself. After what has happened to Kendall the lads are no longer allowed in the woods."

"There were no boys' tracks in or near the shack."

"All were barefoot. Probably a Daniel Boone would find their footprints."

"Did you see any strangers around there?"

"No. I asked my boy that yesterday. Nobody."

Carter was questioned further, but nothing came of it. When they left him Netley was rather downcast, but Barford smiled easily.

"No important fact is changed. Let us admit that the strange man and the stumpy-footed woman only arrived last night. All the more suspicious, for why did they go away so suddenly? Clear case."

"What worries me is our other evidence. That little fire and the charred paper with 'L-e-t' visible on it, and some other things. Must we set them down to the boys?"

"We can ask the lads, but I think they had no hand in it. In fact, I know they had none. Remember the foot-prints. No boy made them. I repeat, this only changes the time of the arrival of our strange shack-people. I like the change. They came, delayed not a bit, did their work and got out. Suspicious, very!"

"But they had confederates here."

"You don't hear me deny it, do you? Here we are at the village. Let me get my telegram off—I want a man in pursuit of the shack-folks."

The telegram had barely been written when Levi, the simple-minded errand-boy, appeared with the announcement that a gentleman was at the hotel who wanted to see Barford. The gentleman proved to be a very different sort of person, a grave, substantial-looking business man, and he asked with considerable solemnity for a private interview. When they reached Barford's room he passed over a sealed letter. Signed by the district attorney, he read as follows:

"This will introduce Mr. Charles Homer. He has told me a story that you should know, so I leave him to do the telling for your confidential ear. He seems to be a reliable man."

Barford turned to the caller.

"I am informed Mr. Homer, that you have something to tell me. It will please me to have you speak. Meanwhile, a cigar——"

"Not now, if you don't mind. I am too much upset to do two things at once. You are Mr. Barford, and on the Kendall case?"

"Yes."

"Well, Harden Kendall was a friend of mine, and I have a strong suspicion as to how he met with death. When a man, as strong-minded as he was, admitted that he was afraid—but let me tell things right. I am in Kendall's own line of business, and live in the city. Two weeks ago he came to me and asked me to witness his will."

"Oh!"

"I confess I was surprised, for he was hardly the kind of man to do such a thing, but that was not my business. Under the impulse of the moment I tried to joke him a bit. Asked him if he had picked out a favorite nephew—for I knew he had several, all similarly his heirs by law. He replied that he should give each an equal share. That led me to wonder why he should make a will at all, for leaving matters to law would work to the same end, but he was so low-spirited that I lost all idea of joking him. I asked if he felt ill, but he declared he was in excellent health. He puzzled me, and I finally gave over meddling with his affairs and went along to the lawyer's to do my part.

"The will was read to me and the other two witnesses. Kendall gave, first of all, perhaps fifty dollars in trivial presents to some of his employes, and then—what do you think?—a clean ten thousand dollars to his housekeeper, Martha Belden."

"Indeed!" said Barford, quietly.

"The next bequest was one hundred dollars to Martha's sister, Dorcas, after which the residue was bequeathed to his nephews in equal shares. Martha Belden was named as executrix."

The narrative was going home, but Barford was too wise to betray what he really thought of the situation.

"Well," he commented, "Mr. Kendall

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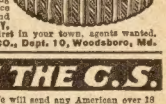

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was none too early in getting the will signed."

"I think he was a mighty sight too early!" Homer exclaimed, and his emphasis was matched by his excitement.

"How is that?"

"Sir, Kendall told me, after we left the office, that the will was a pretense, and that he would soon sign another of very different nature, which, of course, would supersede the one I witnessed."

"Why should he proceed in this manner?"

Homer leaped excitedly to his feet.

"Because his judgment was fatally faulty. He said that the second will would leave the confounded housekeeper out entirely, and that he only signed that one because he was afraid of her. Catch the point? He was afraid of her. And you know what has happened to him since!"

CHAPTER X.
HALF OF A MATCH.

Homer, strong, earnest, and excited, was putting a new face on the situation. Barford was deeply stirred, but the habit of years enabled him to confront the nervous witness and seem composed.

"Kendall said he was afraid of his housekeeper!" Homer repeated forcibly.

"Why should he be afraid of her?" the detective asked.

"Just what I inquired of him, but he gave no direct answer. Indeed, I reckon he was sorry he said so much, but he said it in dead earnest. He was really worried almost out of his wits, sir."

"The housekeeper is Miss Martha Belden—"

"Yes, he spoke her name, and that was it."

"Do you know her?"

"No, and, for that matter, I was never in Kendall's house. I know him well in business, but only by meetings in the city."

"You must have some theory as to why he was afraid of her."

"No, I have not. He gave me no clew, and I can see no light."

"You understand that he made that will because of his fears, giving ten thousand dollars to Miss Belden?"

"Yes."

"Was the will passed over to her?"

"No. It was written by Lawyer Stebbins, or so I infer, for it was signed in his office, and he afterward put it in his safe. I've been to see him, but he is three hundred miles away, engaged in a suit at law. As far as I know, the will is still in his safe."

"Granted that Kendall executed the will under fear of his housekeeper, I fail to see how she could be satisfied unless the document was handed over to her to keep. Further, how was she to know a will had really been signed?"

"Both the other witnesses were strangers to me, but I gathered from Kendall that one was there to represent Miss Belden, and see that everything went through as she wanted it."

"After all this the will was left in the hands of a reputable lawyer—I know Stebbins is that kind of a man—and the housekeeper's hold on the situation was frail. Didn't she see that a will signed under compulsion would be loathed by its maker? Didn't she see the danger that it would be destroyed, or superseded by a different sort of a testamentary document?"

"There you have it!" said Homer, his violent manner returning. "She did see, she must have seen, she must have known that, having a will that made her a fat legatee, it was well to do something while the iron was hot, so to speak. You know what has happened to Kendall?"

"And you accuse Miss Belden of making way with him?"

"Yes—no! Confound it, yes! Maybe the law can grip me for stating what I can't prove, but it's as plain as A B C. Yes, she either killed him herself or hired it done."

"To secure that ten thousand dollars."

"Yes."

Barford's mind went back a little. In talking with him the housekeeper had delicately, but none the less surely, cast suspicion upon Docia Lettington. Also, she had deliberately lied when she said she had not seen Kendall after breakfast, the day of his death. It floated through Barford's mind that Miss Belden had a red-haired sister.

"Clear case," repeated Mr. Homer. "The will was signed, and it was time to get Kendall. She got him!"

"Describe the other witnesses to the will. Was one of them a man of commonplace appearance, perhaps even a laboring man, and did you see in the office or near at hand, a woman with odd, rather stumpy feet?"

"No," replied Homer, looking puzzled. "No woman was there, and the men might all have passed for clerks."

"What was the color of their hair?"

"I reckon I follow you. No red head in the party. They were all, I think, brown-topped."

"You say you do not know why Kendall was afraid of Miss Belden. Do you think it was bodily harm he feared——"

"I surely do think it. Personal violence. And you know what has happened," Homer reminded significantly.

"Do you think that second will was ever signed?"

"I'm fearful it was not. Kendall has been in a rush of business, and he was not a thoughtful man in other ways. Having, as he probably supposed, pacified his housekeeper with the first will, he would be just the person to let the second wait until he could attend to it to his satisfaction."

"That looks the more likely, because, having had you sign the first paper, it would be natural to ask you to sign the second.

"Yes. I'm sorry Lawyer Stebbins is away, for he could tell if paper number one was in his hands now. There is a feeble hope that Kendall has burned it."

Barford's mind took a sudden leap. He recalled the little fire somebody had made in the woods back of Grandon, and the blackened fragment of paper with the incomplete word, "L-e-t" upon it. Even then he had been impressed by the fact that the paper was unusually heavy and, probably, of good quality. Wills were made on all sorts of stuff, but, in his State, there was a thick, durable paper favored by certain lawyers for official use.

Had the will been burned in the woods? Such a theory would naturally upset his other theory that "L-e-t" was the first syllable of Lettington—with his mind at this point Barford had a rather startling suspicion. Suppose Kendall had signed a second will, and that Martha Belden or one of her allies had secured and burned it?

"Now, then," Homer pursued, ignorant of his companion's mind-drifting, "I have told you all I know, and I leave things to you. Here is my card, but I must get back to the city. Business calls imperatively. Still, you can find me any time. Don't forget what I've told you. The strings are in your hands, and you have only to pull them and land Kendall's slayer. It's up to you."

He went out, caught a train inside of five minutes, and was gone. That length of time Barford had devoted to meditation, and while the train was still whooping distressfully in the distance, he hunted up the worthy constable.

"Mr. Carter," he said, "what can you tell me about a little fire somebody lately built in the woods up yonder—it's about in a direct line with the shacks, and, I think, near the tall tree you see there. A very little fire, just big enough to have fed a few twigs. Do you think the small blaze was, perhaps, set by the village boys?"

"No!" asserted the constable. "We have had some experience here with wood fires in the past, and our lads have strict orders to light no fires up that way. We do not abridge their legitimate privileges, but matches they must not take to the woods."

"Will you, in spite of this, ask your own boy?"

Carter was more than willing. He called the young person, a frank, honest-looking lad, and when he had declared himself the detective was satisfied. While positive proof was lacking, he did not think the blaze was made by boys.

Once more fie went to the woods, Netley accompanying him. Reaching the spot where the blaze had been he handled the few ashes slowly and delicately, giving them attention that was almost like sifting them, but he found nothing new. Meanwhile, Netley had been circling about for a space of some rods, hunting for outlying evidence.

"No go," said that gentleman, irritably. "Why couldn't they have dropped a business card here to advertise themselves?"

Barford, staring into space with an expression of deep thought, unconsciously kicked idly at the dry leaves under foot.

"I am more and more persuaded that this fire means something worth knowing, and I will know——"

He stopped short as Netley plunged forward, dropped on his knees at his superior's feet, and reaching, held up something. It was the fragment of a half-burned match, with two stripes of paint on it, each a different color.

They looked at it in continued silence, though it was twice passed from hand to hand. Nothing could be more commonplace to the eye. The match had been used and the lower end thrown away. Their attention to it would have puzzled an outsider, but both men believed that it was the same bit of wood that had lighted the blaze hard by them.

"You know that particular make?" said Barford, at last.

"Yes," Netley answered. "Scharm & Wolffley's Twenty-first Century Parlor Match. No other manufacturer uses that brand of war-paint. Said paint advertises the match, but adds to its cost. Result, that match is not much used."

"Perhaps it was too costly for Harden Kendall. A plain white parlor match is used in his house—I took notice of that, among other things, when calling upon Miss Belden. I think our fair detective ally, Annabel, will get something from her imaginary employers in the city right away, so she can do a little canvassing."

"Meaning—what?"

"This tattooed match is used only in families that can afford it. Annabel will go to a certain rather sizable house in this town, asking the privilege of exhibiting some article that, in demonstrating, will call for the use of a match—say, a gas mantle. Lucky this town is in the region supplied with gas. What she claims to sell shall be left to Annabel, however. The house——"

"I can guess it, Barford."

"Well?"

"Docia Lettington's."

"The fragment of paper we picked up here was conspicuous for a relic of three letters—'L-e-t.' I want to know what match Docia uses."

"Even if she has this sort it will prove nothing against her."

"There would be a good deal of moral support in it, and that's what we need," declared Barford, humorously.

"Docia would hardly burn Kendall's will, unless——" Netley paused and snarled up his forehead in a meditative frown— "unless a second will had been made, and in her favor. Say, how's that for a guess?"

"Harden Kendall was plain, practical, sensible, deep in business. He would scarcely spend all his time making wills in favor of young women."

"He did it once, so why not twice? I don't nestle up to that theory, myself, but the possible sometimes beats the probable in a race. You say the paper burned was stiff, heavy stuff. That may mean a will, a deed, a marriage certificate—eh, why do you start?"

Barford was slow with his reply. He

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turned something over in his mind carefully, and then made his answer.

"You mention marriage certificates incidentally. Do you also remember that the blackened fragment had 'L-e-t' upon it?"

"L-e-t, Lettington," murmured Netley. "Thunder! Do you mean that Docia is married, and that her certificate was burned here?"

"Don't be precipitate, Netley. This is a guessing game, just now. The point is that, if she was married, and to Kendall, the certificate has been burned by Miss Martha Belden or her abettors."

"But the idea won't work out. Remember that you heard Docia talk in Roland Varrick's room. She expressed no sympathy for Kendall, but said he tempted his fate——"

"If the possible is true, I should say be did! If true, I repeat, he was in neck-deep for trouble."

"But he had made Docia an offer——"

"Maybe to borrow money of her. Married men sometimes do it. With the light of your suggestion to aid me, I incline strongly to the belief that somebody burned a marriage certificate here at our feet."

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Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page two.)

the woman would see through him at once. Estelle has been bribed, and they are trying to poison that foolish child's mind. But she can't care for Jerome the way—oh, dear!" with a long sigh. "I wish I had stuck to my nursing."

CHAPTER IV.

The diningroom window at the Fairchild house on Riverside drive commanded a lovely view of the Hudson and the Palisades in the distance. Could one have peeped in on a certain bright morning, a few days after Christmas, Mrs. Fairchild's back would have proved beyond a doubt that a debate was in progress. From frequent nods of the head the lady intended to stand her ground. An open letter lay beside the rector's plate, and evidently was the bone of contention. Another letter lay beside the third place at the long table, which at present was unoccupied.

The table must have groaned beneath the weight of glittering cut glass and silver. The odor from the coffee was luxurious.

"No, Jonathan," said Mrs. Fairchild, daintily removing the last seed from her grapefruit. "It's not worth while to argue the matter."

The rector swallowed a grunt with his coffee. He avoided arguments when possible.

"To be sure I'm your wife," she resumed, "and I hope I've never forgotten my marriage vow of obedience, annoying as my duty is at times."

"But, wife," interrupted the rector, "I never intend to annoy you."

"That is cheering, certainly, Jonathan."

"Nevertheless, our boy must not stay in that malarial cesspool any longer. If the girl is half as good as Jerome says, we must not as Christians close our doors against her without some other reason than her objectionable profession. Who told you the story of her reappearance in public, Kate?"

Mrs. Fairchild was a victim of asthma. She inhaled from a bottle at her side, and the rector fumed impatiently.

"This is your home, Jonathan, and, if you insist upon her coming here, I must obey you. As to the story, everybody is talking about it. Emily Bradley says the toast from the best clubs down to the lowest barrooms is now Berenice Marther."

"What does Emily Bradley know about it, I'd like to know," grunted Mr. Fairchild.

"I suppose she heard it from her husband. It was his brother, Jack Bradley, who introduced Jerome and the actress. Now," she resumed, "which room shall I prepare for her?"

"Dear me, Kate, how provoking you are! You have purposely misunderstood me. I only ask you to call on the poor child. Seems to me, we are asking too much of her, and giving nothing in return." Mr. Fairchild unconsciously used his son's words, showing that they had made a deeper impression than Jerome had imagined. "If she has any feelings," he added, "they must be very painful just now, and her opinion of us will not be very high."

"I don't care a fig for her opinion. But I wouldn't for worlds hurt anybody's feelings, Jonathan. I will put her down on my list of poor people that I must call upon soon. I'm not the kind to shirk my duty. It's fortunate I don't look for gratitude, for I certainly won't get it. However, I'll go."

"I hope," said Mr. Fairchild, "you will find her as charming and guileless as our boy thinks she is."

Mrs. Fairchild's manner showed that she thought the hope was a vain one.

"I trust so, I'm sure," she returned. "But I don't see why Jerome should want me to know such dreadful people, and then go down to the Philippine Islands, and get ill, when nobody can do anything for him. Really, it's shocking conduct in a clergyman." And she dabbed her eyes with a dainty cambric handkerchief. "Of course," she continued, "if I only had myself to consider, I should make a point of pleasing you by receiving the actress. But Julia is a great responsibility. A girl always is, and, of course, I owe a special duty to my own niece."

"But I don't understand——"

"You never do understand things, Jonathan. You live in the clouds, or somewhere else, walk straight into trouble, and then wonder how you got there."

The rector was guiltily aware that this was true. He had recently allowed himself to listen to a hard-luck story, and only for his wife's vigilence, might have been weak enough to have rendered substantial assistance.

"I always thought that Julia liked Jerome," remarked the rector. "I have hoped that if we could break up this unfortunate attachment, the children might care for each other. But in the meantime, we must consider the boy's health."

"Children are so contrary. They never do what you expect them to. I dare say, Jerome is no exception. I suppose he will come here to live and have a lot of little actresses."

"Don't talk such nonsense, Kate," said the rector, irritably. "You know that I have no intention of allowing the boy to expiate his folly to the extent of marrying her, if it can be avoided. I thought you might call on her and see if she's a possibility."

Mrs. Fairchild was wrapped in an atmosphere of self-sacrifice and martyrdom impossible to ignore.

"Of course," she complained, "it's a painful duty, I understand that perfectly. But we must face these things bravely, as I'm sure I heard you preach only last Sunday."

Mr. Fairchild concealed his annoyance at his wife's obstinate refusal to be rational, and sought to effect a digression.

Just then the rustle of skirts announced the coming of Julia, a girl of twenty, fresh and sweet as a rose, possessing an indescribable charm, which showed in the dimple in her cheek, the cruve of her red lips, and in every movement of her rounded figure. Her hair, which was a soft brown was twisted in thick braids and covered the back of her head, and the little curling tendrils crept waywardly around her ears and neck.

"I thought I heard my name," she said, taking the vacant seat. "What were you saying about me, auntie?"

"'Twas your uncle who mentioned your name," answered Mrs. Fairchild, disapprovingly.

"I merely remarked, my dear, that I thought you were fond of Jerome."

Julia's face brightened, and she reached for her coffee. "Of course I am," she replied, in settled tones. "Who could know Jerome without getting fond of him? If I had been blessed with a brother I couldn't have cared for him more."

Julia spoke enthusiastically, and Mrs. Fairchild looked frigidly at her husband, as one who would say, "I told you so; children are so ungrateful."

"Here's a letter from Doctor Ferguson, in which he tells us that Jerome is far from well," resumed the rector. "He hasn't become acclimated yet."

Julia met the attentive glances of her aunt and uncle, and in genuinely grieved tones said:

"Poor Jerome! Isn't it too bad and we can't do a thing for him, auntie? Do you think he is very ill?"

"The Doctor doesn't say so, and Jerome didn't mention it at all," replied the rector, anxiously.

"Poor dear Jerome, that's so like him, but perhaps it isn't as bad as you think," she said, hopefully.

Then, glancing at the letter by her plate, she casually opened it. "From Emily Bradley," she explained. "Now, what does she want, I wonder?"

Mrs. Fairchild, watching her niece closely, saw her head bent lower over the letter. The girl finished reading it, and went on with her breakfast. As Julia volunteered no information, her aunt's suspicions were verified.

"What is the news?" she asked, curiously.

Julia's face flushed to the roots of her hair, and she salted her egg regardlessly. "Jack Bradley's regiment is ordered out to the Philippines, and Emily is going to give him some sort of a send-off. She invites us," she answered, absently.

Cold disapproval proceeded from Mrs. Fairchild. "Dear me," she said, with an air of finality, "I wonder the Government doesn't order us all to the Philippines."

Julia Parks was the eldest of seven girls. Her father was a struggling doctor in a poor and small village in a dis-

(Continued on page thirteen.)

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"No—not till I had seen my lawyer."

Had Tried It.

Winks—What's the best thing to do when you spill a cup of tea on a lady's dress?

Jinks—Run.

Explained.

"Jennie is always boasting of the number of her callers."

"That's right. She'S a telephone operator."

No Need of Printing.

New Boarder—I see they have no bill of fare here.

Old Boarder—Don't worry. You'll soon learn it.

"I tell you, Eary, that tariff law is wus then the crime of 73'."

"Now, looky here, Hank, yew know it haint any sich stuff, an'——"

"Eary, yew haint got any more sense erbout politics than a last year's bird's nest. Why, yew——"

"Now, look what you've done, yo old chump, yew got our whiskers knotted together! Concarn——"

"Hold still yew two old lunatics, while I cut the knot, then yew can fight it out."

Detachable Locks.

"The baby likes to play with my hair."

"But you don't trust him with it when you are out, do you?" inquired her caller.

And thus a coolness between two women who had been lifelong friends.

Why She Prefers Black.

"I see you're still in mourning, though your husband has been dead three years."

"Yes, in the first place, I can never forget him, and then my fiance likes me better in black."

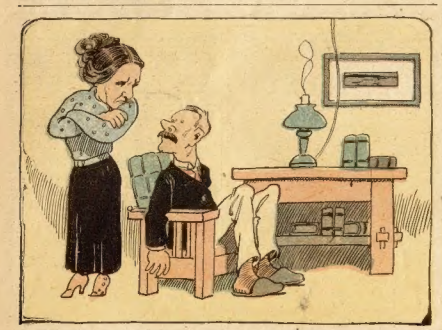
Misplaced Sympathy.

An Englishman was motoring in a country district of Ireland when he came upon a pathetic sight. A poor old woman was seated with all her humble belongings about her by the roadside in front of her cottage.

The English tourist was deeply moved. "Poor old dame," he thought to himself. "This, then, is what an Irish eviction means. The sadness of it." And he stopped the car and got down and gave the old lady a £5 note.

"Tell me, my aged woman," he said, "why have you been cast forth from your humble dwelling?"

The old woman clutched the £5 note and told him: "Shure, sor, me old man's whitewashin' the inside."



Wife—When I married you I thought you were a brave man.

Husband—So did everybody else.

But One Fault.

A prominent Kansas City man who recently moved from one city to his finely bred watch dog to one of his old friends. Along with the dog went a pedigree, bench show ribbons and most enthusiastic praises.

"He is the best watch dog in this town," he explained. "Looks fierce, never sleeps at night, has more sense than any dog you ever saw."

"He must be a real wonder," said his friend, echoing the giver's enthusiasm, "almost too good to be true. Hasn't the dog any fault at all?"

"Yes," admitted the former owner, grudgingly, "just one—he's afraid of strangers."

Mrs. Nixon—Mrs. Kabo won everything she has in her house playing bridge.

Mrs. Arden—Her husband, too?

Mrs. Nixon—Her husband?

Mrs. Arden—Well, I often heard her say he was a booby prize.

Doing His Share

"I suppose," remarked the heiress' father, "you have gained my daughter that you will grant her every wish."

"No," replied Baron Fucash; "I will not misrepresent my financial resources. But I will do my best to be of service."

"In what way?"

"I will help her to wish."

He Knew.

"That's right," said the teacher, encouragingly to the very small boy who was laboriously learning his A B C's. "Now, what comes after C?"

"Whiz."

Mr. Holmes—I notice that you have a new kitchen maid.

Mrs. Borden-Lodge—I have. But I think it's perfectly wonderful how you can make such accurate deductions.

Mr. Holmes—Quite simple, ma'am. I've been comparing the thumb prints on the plates.

Preferred the Earthquake.

A certain island in the West Indies is liable to the periodical advent of earthquakes. One year before the season of these terrestrial disturbances, Mr. X., who lived in the danger zone, sent his two sons to the home of his brother in England to secure them from the impending havoc.

Evidently the quiet of the staid English household was disturbed by the irruption of the two West Indians, for the returning mail steamer carried a message to Mr. X., brief but emphatic:

"Take back your boys; send me the earthquake."

A Professional Opinion.

Householder—I am going to move to the suburbs next Monday, and I'd like you to do the job.

Mover—How many loads?

"I don't know. You moved me once, you may remember."

"Yes; I needed three wagons then to get through; but that was some years ago. Have you moved since?"

"Yes, indeed, half a dozen times."

"Hum; I guess one wagon will carry all you have left."

Hard Lines.

Employment Agent—What's the matter with that last place?

Domestic—The missus do have cut-glass tumblers phwat coasht wan dollar a-pace, an' she says Oi must pay fur all I break. Sure Oi'd niver have any wages at all, at all.

Perfectly Horrid.

Mother (at a ball)—Are you enjoying yourself, dear?

Daughter—No, I am not.

"What is the matter?"

"I've refused George six dances in succession, and he doesn't seem miserable a bit."

A Smart Man.

Bliffers—Your wife is a busy little woman. Makes her own clothes, doesn't she?

Wiffers—Every stich.

"How did you work it?"

"Always fell in love with her dressmakers."

Quite Another Thing.

Pendennis—Did you see Hooker when he came in from fishing?

Warrington—Yes; I was on the pier.

"Were there any fish lying about him?"

"No; he was lying about the fish."

A Real Need.

Agent—I would like to show you something that a child can manage.

Distracted Parent—We don't need it; but have you anything that can manage a child?

Very Obstinate.

Mrs. Bacon—She's one of the most obstinate women I ever knew.

Mrs. Egbert—Indeed?

Mrs. Bacon—Yes; why, I believe if she took laughing gas she'd cry!

Their Class.

Teacher—Now, children, are your fathers mammals or invertebrates?

Child (timidly after a painful silence)—Please, miss, they're all Republicans in this ward.

Explained.

Teacher—Can any little boy explain why the race is not always to the swift?

Smart Pupil—Because sometimes their gasoline supply gives out.

Imperative.

Business Man—You tell me I am hurting myself sitting so long at my desk, but I can't make any money if I don't.

Doctor—Have you enough to pay me?

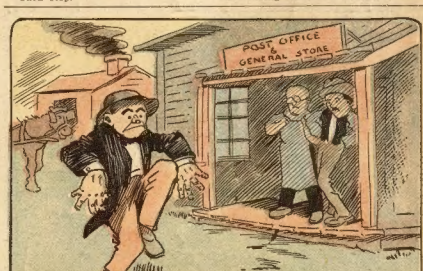
"Y-e-s."

"Then stop."

Willing to Help.

Pastor's Wife—Has any one offered to replaster the church yet?

Struggling Pastor—N-o, not exactly; but Doctor Stickem has offered to cover the walls with porous plasters if we don't mind seeing his name on them.



Silas—Hain't Bill awfully nervous?

Rufe—He ain't nervous. He's just practicing on a weddin' march. He sent a post card to Elvira Brinks yesterday proposin'. I read it myself.

Mistaken.

Old Friend—To tell you the truth, George, this house you're in now is no great shaken.

George (grimly)—Wait till you've slept in it through a storm.

A Sensible Maiden.

Impecunious Lover—Be mine, Amanda, and you will be treated like an angel.

Wealthy Maiden—Yes, I suppose so. Nothing to eat and less to wear. No, thank you.

He—I only get fifty per week.

She—Darling, I'd marry you if you didn't get over $49.98.

Warning Him.

"I am talking with the spirit of your dead husband," said the medium. "Have you any message for him?"

"Yes; tell him to be sure not to say anything that will shock the angels. I always had to warn him about that when he was on earth."

Took Him Literally.

"I have beaten my sword into a plowshare," remarked the young officer who had resigned.

"Dear me!" exclaimed his sweetheart. "I wanted that sword to decorate my cozy corner with."

Had Studied Some.

Old Lady—I'm dreadfully afraid of these newfangled 'lectric lights.

Young Lady—Why so?

Old Lady—Electricity makes thunder, I guess you know, and I'm awfully afraid of thunder.

No One Would Notice It.

Hunchback—Yes, I have plenty of spare time; but what can I do with it? Whatever I should do I would be laughed at.

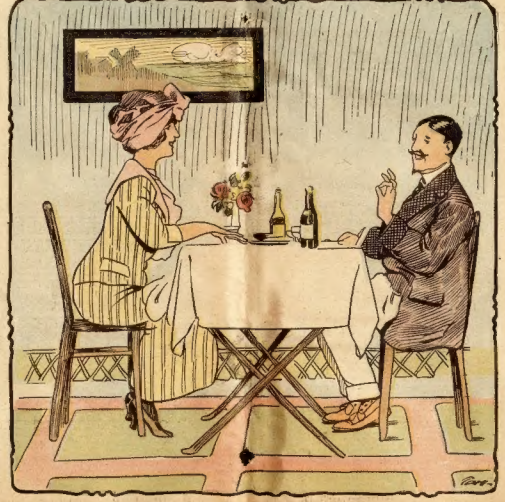
Friend—Nonsense! You'd look as well as any one else on a bicycle.

Quicker the Sooner.

Chauffeur—Is there an ordinance limiting the speed of autos in this town?

Native—Gawsh, no! You fellers can't git through Squashville any too quick for us.

A CONFESSION.



Miss Hartfelt—What an awful cough you have, Mr. Littleneck.

Mr. Littleneck—Yes. It was so warm that I changed my cameo scarf pin for a pearl and then it turned cool and I caught cold in my chest.

Why He Tramped.

Housekeeper—I'd like to know why you go tramping through the country?

Mouldy Mike—Well, mum, I've heard that theas 'ere palace cars is rather stuffy, mum.

Perils of Poverty.

Friend—What is that big black spot on the ceiling?

Host—I am a poor man, and can't afford to employ an engineer to run a new patent parlor lamp I bought.

The Innkeeper—When he came he weighed one hundred pounds only and when he left he weighed one hundred and fifty.

Bill Hawk—Mercy! How did he take on such weight?

The Innkeeper—Skipped with fifty pounds of our table knives.

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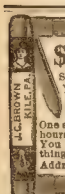

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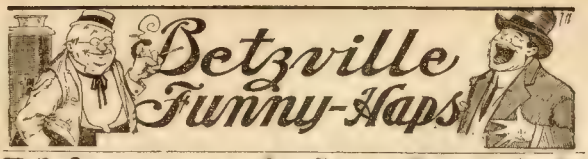

Phipps and the Ostrich

By Ellis Parker Butler

[Copyright by W. G. Chapman.]

LAST September, when the rainy season began in Betzville, the World-Renowned Hoggins' Three Ring Shows struck town, and they were already in pretty bad shape, the sheriffs along the line having reduced them to about one ring and a sixteenth, and when they came to pay the bill of the Betzville News for advertising, things looked black. So Orley Gibbs, the editor, got out an attachment and levied on the show, but it was worse than he thought it would be, and he had to take the ostrich. It was either that or the hyena, and the ostrich seemed more in an editor's line than a hyena. An ostrich often lunches on old scrap iron, and an editor often comes mighty near having to do the same thing in Betzville.

But when Orley had the ostrich he was bothered. A bird that eats scrap iron looks at first glance like an economical bird, but scrap iron commands a regular market price in Betzville, and the only scrap iron Orley had was his printing press. And that press was such a disreputable lot of old junk that even the ostrich would not eat it. So Orley fed it lightly on printing type, beginning with the x's, for he used them less than the e's or i's, but he saw he would have to get rid of the bird soon or leave out his local column entirely. So instead of having the bird ruin the News, Orley thought of a way to have it boost it.

There was a grand rush in Betzville when it became known that Orley was offering the ostrich as a prize to the person turning in the most new subscriptions to the News, and Uncle Clootz secured one subscriber, and Orone McDooble nearly secured one, but that one got away. When the contest ended, it was found that it stood:

Uncle	1
Cousin Orone	0
Other distinguished citizens	0
Wives of same	0
Others	0
Colonel Randolph Phipps	2

It was learned later that Colonel Phipps hired his two subscribers to subscribe, but this was unknown at the time, and only goes to show how unscrupulous he was. He said later that if necessary he would have gone so far as to hire another subscriber, he wanted the ostrich so badly. Colonel Phipps was a leading raiser of Shanghai chickens in our county, and he figured that if he took that long-legged ostrich and tied it near his coop it would act as a stirring incentive to his Shanghais, and fill them with a desire to emulate the ostrich in long leggedness. He said that he thought that if he could produce a Shanghai fowl, with body of the ordinary size, and legs as long as an ostrich's legs he would be rid, once and for all, of the trouble of rats eating the new-laid eggs, for he could build nests in the trees, and his hens could easily stand on the ground and lay eggs in the nests.

But the first thing he had to do was to fatten the ostrich, for it was pretty thin. Probably there never was such a thin ostrich. It was so thin that the roots of the feathers on its left side rubbed against the roots of the feathers on its right side, and you had to look at it side-view to see it at all. So Colonel Phipps sent down for a couple of kegs of nails and the ostrich gobbled them down, and looked around for more. So the Colonel sent down to the store for more nails, and he kept feeding nails to the ostrich until the hardware man said that he had reached his credit limit. By that time the ostrich was well filled with nails. He contained eight-pennies, and ten-pennies, and some screws, and five pounds of spikes, and a keg of shingle nails, and the Colonel began to be afraid the ostrich was overeating, but the ostrich did not think so. Between meals it walked up and down the sidewalk before the Colonel's house and ate the nails out of the sidewalk. Whenever it saw the hardware wagon approaching it would gallop gayly down the street to meet it, uttering little squawks of joy.

But last Thursday, when the hardware delivery wagon approached the Colonel's residence, the ostrich made a sad mistake. It had dashed out into the road as usual and poked its head into the wagon while the delivery boy was unloading the nails, and it saw a likely looking tidbit and swallowed it. It happened to be a box of fifty 44-caliber cartridges intended for Sim Perkins, and the delivery boy missed them and reached for the railroad spike he always kept on the wagon seat to tap the ostrich on the head with when it became too friendly, but the spike was gone! The delivery boy immediately called for the Colonel and demanded the cartridges and the big spike, but the Colonel was bothered about something else just then for the ostrich had the hiccoughs. Probably it had overeaten.

The Colonel did not care whether it had overeaten or not. What he cared about was that there was a box of 44s inside that bird, and a sharp pointed spike with them, and that every hiccough must be jerking the sharp point of the spike around among those cartridges, like the hammer of a pistol, and that the affectionate bird was aimed directly at him. Any minute one of those 44s might go off and kill the Colonel, and the Colonel knew it. He was far from happy in the affection of that ostrich, but the bird loved him and longed to show it. Colonel Phipps went down the road at full run, and the ostrich followed closely at a hiccoughy trot. Just at the corner of Main and Cross streets the bird began to shoot. For an instant it exhibited a wild surprise, but the moment after it had no time to exhibit anything. It was exploding 44s with the rapidity of a gatling gun. Of course there were only fifty cartridges in the box, so the ostrich did not shoot long, but it shot well. For a careless, unaimed ostrich, firing wild, it was beyond reproach. It shot the Colonel eight times out of a possible fifty, and with its last, expiring throb it sent a bullet right into the sawdust filled imiation ham in the butcher-shop window, and tomorrow at one p. m. the ham and the Colonel will be buried.

"Swartz and the Shadow" will be next week's Funny-hap. Lay for it, sure

The bird began to shoot.

Reasonable.

A certain German-American citizen of a Massachusetts town is by nature a most suspicious person, but he appreciates a reasonable proposition, as will appear herefrom.

One day a traveling butcher came to him and bargained with reference to eight head of fine cattle. The price proving satisfactory, the butcher felt in his pockets, to discover that the had not brought his money with him.

"I haven't got the money with me," said he, "but I'll tell you what I'll do. I will drive the cattle to town and send the money back to you."

"Nein!" exclaimed the other emphatically. "Dot goes not goot. You brings de money first."

"Then" frankly came from the butcher. "I'll drive only six of them in, and I'll leave the other two as security for the debt."

The Teuton reflected deeply; then his face lighted. "All righd," he said. "Dot is chust so goot. Ven you leave dose two you had bought den it is sure you comes back und pays me!"

Benjamin's Troubles.

The little three-year-old son of a proud North Side father and mother became so greatly interested in a phonograph belonging to one of the neighbors that he quite forgot to go home at his accustomed bedtime.

"Tell you what we'll do," said his father to his mother. "We'll put out the lights and pretend we've gone to bed. That will teach Master Bennie a lesson."

When the little chap hurried home about eight o'clock, he stopped in consternation at the gate on noticing that the place bore a dark and gloomy aspect.

He called several times before his mother, too kind-hearted to keep him waiting any longer, answered him in make-believe sleepy tones.

"What is it, my child?" asked the mother.

With trembling voice the youngster replied:

"Mother, you will please tell Benjamin's father that his son is out here and wants to come in?"

Next morning at breakfast the parents, who were prepared to hear their little son excuse his conduct of the evening before, were astonished to hear him exclaim:

"Papa, don't you think it's time I was having a night key?"

Mr. Henry Peck (the bridegroom)—Come this way, Miss Pickles. I want to show you my new talking machine

Miss Pickles—I believe I have met Mrs. Peck before.

Showing Him Up.

A story of the early mining days in Colorado has to do with the self-sufficiency of Patrick Smith, a self-appointed justice of the peace, and the biting wit of a young lawyer, who attempted to defend a man charged with stealing a horse.

The lawyer argued that the fact that the man had the horse was not proof positive that he had stolen it. Justice Smith instantly overruled the point.

The lawyer then read from Blackstone a case identical with the one before the court.

"What do I care for Blackstone or any other lawyer?" cried Justice Smith. "I know the man stole the horse, and I have decided he's guilty. That's enough. I'm judge here."

"Your honor," answered the lawyer, "I know you have decided the case. I read the extract merely to show you what an old fool——"

"What's that?" interrupted the justice, jumping to his feet in a rage.

"Blackstone was," calmly finished the lawyer, while he resumed his seat.

Not Afraid.

Mr. Newrich had his own ideas about what a person should be to keep well, and what he should eat and drink. His intentions; therefore, being good, what does it matter that his language sometimes slipped up? Says the Philadelphia Record:

"With all your wealth, are you not afraid of the proletariat?" asked the deliver in sociologic21 problems.

"No, I ain't!" snapped Mr. Newrich. "We boil all our drinkin' water."

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Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page nine.)

tant State. Her mother was a counterpart of her sister, Mrs. Fairchild. For years Julia had begged to be allowed to do something to help the plodding father. But the good man was too proud to consent, and her mother preferred to rock her babies and complain, to receiving substantial assistance from her children.

Julia was a great favorite with the rector and his wife, and often paid them long visits. This time she had come with a purpose in her mind, and she had been with them for two months without making her wishes known. As Mrs. Fairchild resignedly inhaled her asthma relief, Julia, after a brief pause, addressed Mr. Fairchild.

"Uncle," she said, impulsively, "I want to be a hospital nurse."

For a moment sheer amazement held them silent. Then, as the absurdity of the idea struck him, a glance at her eager, earnest face convinced him that it was no joke with her. Mrs. Fairchild was shocked into speechlessness.

"What do you know about hospitals?" asked the rector. He felt that he was on the verge of discovering something until now unsuspected in the girl's character, and it behooved him to walk warily if he wished to retain her confidence.

"I've always wanted to be a nurse ever since I used to bandage the baby and play hospital in the nursery. Several years ago, when Dolly was ill at the seashore, I helped to nurse her. Both the doctor and the nurse said I had a faculty. I have corresponded with the nurse ever since. Father doesn't know, and she has sent me papers and helped me with my studies."

"Good gracious!" breathed Mrs. Fairchild, at last. "What are we coming to?"

"Bless me!" the rector said. He was quite convinced of the uselessness of the desire, but he hated to tell her so. After all, there was no disgrace in that profession. It might have been something outrageous, considering what a dull life the child had at home.

"But imagine—only imagine—such a thing possible. You don't know the first thing about getting into a hospital, or what to do when you get there."

But it appeared she knew just what she wanted and how to go about getting it. She even knew which hospital would accept a probationer. Her persuasiveness was resistless, her enthusiasm infectious.

"There will be a commotion at home," said the rector, feeling he was weakly yielding.

"Father thinks an awful lot of your opinion," she reminded him, with sudden unsuspected flattery that did more than anything else to gain his assent.

"We shall have to write and see what he says about it."

"Then you'll help me?" she cried, eagerly. Jumping from the table, she threw her arms with a quick impulse, foreign to her usual composed reserve, around his neck. "Oh, uncle, dear uncle, how kind you are!"

Both the rector and his niece had studiously avoided Mrs. Fairchild during the discussion. Whatever opinions that lady entertained on the subject were congealed into frozen silence, and did not thaw out until many days later.

CHAPTER V.

When Jerome Fairchild and Doctor Ferguson arrived in Manila, they found it a place of wonderful activity. American troops were pouring in, and fighting was sharp and incessant around the capital; and there was work for all. Ambulances were bringing in the wounded, and the battle for life went on long after the final expedition which finished all but guerrilla fighting.

Doctor Ferguson worked like a Trojan, an Jerome was unfailing in his office of administering comfort and cheer. His duty took him out in the heat of the day, when danger from sunstroke or chilled blood in the damp ditches of the jungle was imminent. After his first caution to the young chaplain, Doctor Ferguson was too busy to give much attention to the well, and without a thought for himself, Jerome plunged headlong into his work. During the first few months he had ample time for reflection.

He was twenty-four, but he loved and was beloved, and could only consider a year's separation an absurd, though well-meant, parental interference. But when week after week went by, and Berenice's letters became rarer and rarer, Jerome became abstracted and morbid. One day, in a fit of despair, he wrote as follows to Amabel:

"Tell me what you are all doing. How is Berenice? And why doesn't she write to me? Take care of her for me, and forgive me for troubling you. Yours,

JEROME."

The letter was short but the receipt of it gave Amabel keen delight, mingled, to be sure, with a certain amount of pain. How could she answer? Could she write and say that Berenice had returned to the stage, and at the present time was revolving between dressmakers and milliners, in a wild excitement of trying on bridal dresses and hats, that the weightiest problem just now was the trimming of her "going away" dress? It was impossible. Amabel felt that she couldn't deal such a blow, nor could she disguise the fact of her cousin's engagement to a distinguished Bostonian, son of a professor of something or other at Harvard, in words that would be powerless to hurt him.

Her pen was inadequate to the undertaking, so she put off answering indefinitely. Amabel had discovered that she had a heart, and at the same time realized that her affections were doomed to disappointment. But she was a sweetly unselfish girl, and had used every argument in her power to induce Berenice to trust Jerome.

Meanwhile, Jerome chafed under the separation. He was seeing a great deal of Doctor Ferguson, who was an invaluable friend for a young man, and Doctor kept Mr. Fairchild well posted as to his son's movements, but there was no word to intimate that the young man had renounced one iota of his affection for the little actress. When Doctor Ferguson's attention was first attracted to Jerome's thin cheeks and round shoulders, it was hard to decide whether it was caused by mental aggravations and heart-hunger, or malarial fever. It was the rainy season, and Jerome was reckless.

About this time, an old friend of both the Doctor and Jerome, one of the heroes of the day, was called in from the field, and the friends met in the capital.

Jack Bradley was young for a captain of regulars, but he was a thoroughbred, and his name came to stand for luck and bravery. There was something about his manner that always charmed even his soldiers, though it was not easy to reconcile the medium-sized, mild-voiced gentleman with the roaring, tempestuous man, who, it was said, had made it piping hot for the natives around the Luzon provinces. As the Captain had left home several months later than Jerome and Doctor Ferguson, he was able to tell some news, although he had not received much mail for several weeks.

Jerome could not bring himself to mention Berenice, even to Bradley, though he was very fond of him. Her name was too deeply sacred. Moreover, he felt that Bradley did not see the girl in the pure white light she stood for him. He trembled with the hope that Berenice was true to him, and he would hear it from his friends. But he dreaded to hear that she had grown tired of waiting for him. He felt it would be more than a death warrant.

One day a Filipino was seen hovering around the American camp. Supposing him to be a spy, an overzealous soldier fired. With a howl of pain the native dropped to the earth. A shot was such a common occurrence it caused little or no comment. But Jerome Fairchild, happening to be in the vicinity, approached to see the cause.

Apparently the wounded man was dying. Jerome performed first aid, and ordered him to be carried into the hospital. While Doctor Ferguson removed the bullet the young chaplain administered the last sacrement. Captain Bradley was sent for to look the man over. He recognized a poor, half-witted native, whom he had rescued from a band of hilarious Spaniards.

The poor fellow had heard of the Captain's arrival, and with an excess of gratitude was probably hanging around in hopes of getting a glimpse of his preserver. Bradley was indignant, and immediately it became everybody's duty to tend the Filipino. The poor wretch lay with big, unconscious eyes rolling from one strange face to another. But he did not die, and later, when he was well enough to limp weakly about the hospital, his devotion to Doctor Ferguson, Jerome and the young Captain was pathetic.

Ever since their arrival in Manila, Doctor Ferguson and the minister had

(Continued on page nineteen.)

DIFFERENT NOW

Since the Slugger, Coffee, Was Abandoned.

Coffee probably causes more biliousness and so-called malaria than any one other thing—even bad climate. (Tea is just as harmful as coffee because it contains *caffeine* the drug in coffee.)

A Ft. Worth man says:

"I have always been of a bilious temperament, subject to malaria and up to one year ago a perfect slave to coffee. At times I would be covered with boils and full of malarial poison, was very nervous and had swimming in the head.

"I don't know how it happened, but I finally became convinced that my sickness was due to the use of coffee, and a little less than a year ago I stopped coffee and began drinking Postum.

"From that time I have not had a boil, not had malaria at all, have gained 15 pounds good solid weight and know beyond all doubt this is due to the use of Postum in place of coffee as I have taken no medicine at all.

"Postum has certainly made healthy, red blood for me in place of the blood that coffee drinking impoverished and made unhealthy." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Postum makes red blood.

"There's a reason," and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

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Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

500 Dearborn Avenue.

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Single subscriptions to The Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express money Order, payable to The Chicago Ledger. Subscription price in Canada $1.50 a year. We do not send receipts for money paid on subscriptions; the address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

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Few women are capable of suffering in silence.

Cold cash always gets a warm reception.

Towns are not as red as they are painted.

Even the wisest of us get fooled occasionally.

Some men are as unreliable as a woman's watch.

A thing isn't necessarily overdone when it is done over.

Wise are they who think twice before getting married once.

The best way to get rid of slander is to let it starve to death.

A self-made man nearly always makes a play for a tailor made wife.

Forget the sorrows of yesterday and go after the joys of today.

It's awfully hard for the average man to keep his advice to himself.

Many a woman has an old hat on her head and a new one on her mind.

Bees can't talk, but they often get back at one with a stinging retort.

A dog's bark may be worse than his bite, but give us the bark every time.

A woman may pray to get into heaven, but she will fight to get into society.

It's easy for a man to admire a strong-minded woman—if he isn't married to her.

Little drops of comfort, little grains of hope, fill the office seeker full of election hope.

And a woman doesn't take half the care of her health that she does of her clothes.

It is difficult for some men to be good when they have a good chance to be otherwise.

Love may not make the world go 'round, but it seems to make a lot of people giddy.

A woman may be a perfect lady while gnawing corn off the cob, but she certainly doesn't look it.

A good thing about summer is your appreciating it when the mercury is flirting with the zero mark.

Every married woman is satisfied that he could name the crankiest man in the world if called upon to do so.

When a young couple want to hitch up and the old man kicks over the traces a runaway match is apt to result.

A modest man never blows his own horn. He lets his fool friends hire a brass band to head his procession.

Fetters of Guilt.

(Continued from page five.)

'I shall be glad to hear it."

"The person in the house—if the person is still there—had nothing to do with the death of the man killed at the inn."

"Are you sure?"

"I know," she said, positively.

"I thank you," he replied.

She turned as if to go.

"Please wait a moment," he implored. "You admit that there is a man in the house?"

"Yes—two, perhaps."

"Two?" echoed Quigley.

"Perhaps."

"Will you tell me their names?"

"One of them you probably never heard of."

"And the other?"

"Is Mr. Huddleson!" she replied.

Quigley was taken completely by surprise.

"And he is here with you?" he asked.

"He is waiting for me at the house."

"But you are going away alone!" exclaimed Quigley.

"We left the cart near here. We had reasons for not taking it to the house. I am now going to bring it. It is hard for Mr. Huddleson to climb the hill on his crutches."

"Ah, I see. You will let me assist you."

"If you will."

"It will give me great pleasure," he answered.

She led the way to a little glade where a horse hitched to a cart stood in waiting. As he assisted her into the vehicle her hand lay for a moment in his and her breath touched his cheek. He never forgot that moment. He put out a detaining hand.

"Miss Simmons," he said, "I am led to believe you are in trouble. I do not know what that trouble it. I do want to ask you, though, to let me help you if you need a friend."

"You can do nothing," she said, hurriedly.

"But you promise?" he insisted. He leaned toward her and took her hand. "If you need a friend you will let me know?"

She withdrew her hand, a swift coloring sweeping across her face.

"You are very kind," she said, "but I—I am not in need of any help——"

"But you won't refuse to let me come and see you—tomorrow?" he pleaded. "I have something to say to you—something of importance to tell you. I must see you. May I?"

A startled look came into her eyes. Her hands trembled as she held the lines. "What do you mean?" she asked. "What—what is it that you want to tell me?"

She paused abruptly. Sounds of approaching steps broke on their ears, and the familiar figure of Paul Darrell emerged from the shadows of the trees and approached. Miss Simmons leaned forward quickly.

"I must go now," she said. "I should like for you and your friend—if this is he coming—not to follow me to the Sky Springs House, and—I will see you tomorrow."

She touched the horse quickly with the whip, and the next instant the cart shot into the road and was whirled rapidly down the slope in the direction of the Sky Springs.

"Why, what the thunder!" ejaculated Darrell, as he came face to face with Quigley. "Who was the lady? And what is she doing here?"

Quigley stared at the other in sudden embarrassment.

"I'll explain later," he replied, after a moment's silence. "I suppose we had as well be off."

Darrell eyed him in amazement.

"By Jove! What is all this mystery?" he demanded. "I left you on one side of the house to keep watch, and I find you out here holding converse with a strange young lady, and you don't want to explain! What is in the wind?"

"Don't get excited," advised Quigley. "I fancy I am as much interested in this business as you are, and I am not throwing off."

"I am not certain that you have not been hypnotized," declared Darrell, "and by the girl, whoever she is. But never mind! I am ready to pull for home if you say so."

"That's a sensible chap," agreed Quigley. "Come on. Our rig is just up the road a little way."

As they drove up the slope toward the road leading to Mapleton, Darrell turned to his companion.

"You have not told me the name of the lady you were talking to," he said, "but I think I can guess who she is."

"There is no need of your guessing," broke in Quigley, a little impatiently. "It was Miss Simmons."

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

After a girl has acted as bridesmaid five or six times she begins to feel as unimportant as an ex-vice-president.

A Good Retort.

"Henry Clay Ide, our minister to Spain," said a Washington official, "gets on well in Madrid because he has a great affection for the Spanish people.

"Mr. Ide, while no champion of the bullfight, hates to hear the Spaniard's abused for cruelty on this head.

"He tells an anecdote of a Spaniard traveling from San Sebastian to Biarritz in a first-class compartment with an American.

"'You Spaniards are a great nation,' the American said. 'But I can't understand how a nation that produced Velasquez and Valdez can stomach the savage cruelty of the bullfight.'

"The Spaniard rolled his black eyes at this, inhaled a great cloud of cigarette smoke and said:

"'You have in America a number of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, I believe?'

"'Yes.'

"'And they do good work?'

"'Oh, splendid work.'

"Now the Spaniard showed his white teeth in a smile.

"'Well, senor, such societies would be useless in my country,' he said. 'The man who would lift his hand against a little child has not been born in Spain.'"

* * *

Given a Change.

A most curious experience was that of a quarryman who in one of his rambles stumbled on an old deserted quarry within which, half buried, lay an enormous block of marble.

On examining it he found a number of letters rudely cut and he managed to spell out the words:

"Blessed is he who shall turn me over."

The man at once jumped to the conclusion that he had stumbled on hidden treasure. He rushed home and collected some of his friends to aid him. After much hard labor they succeeded in turning the hoary giant over. Another rude inscription met their eager gaze:

"Thanks, my friends. I am weary of reposing so long in one position."

* * *

Forgot Himself.

Wife—My dear you haven't a cold, have you?

Husband—No.

"And headache?"

"None at all."

"Rheumatism?"

"Not a particle."

"You don't think it will rain, do you?"

"No danger. Why?"

"This is Sunday morning, and it's most church time."

IT CURES RHEUMATISM

A Kansas City Man Who Discovered A Simple Prescription That Cures Rheumatism Makes A Liberal Offer.

Mr. H. Lee, a chemist located at 829 A East Fifteenth St., Kansas City, Mo., discovered a simple preparation that cures any form of Rheumatism. Mr. Lee said: "A friend of mine who had a very bad case of Rheumatism tried this preparation and was completely cured. Hundreds of people here in the city began to call on me about it, and hundreds of people have been cured by it. Now I am receiving many letters from people all over the country who want to know about it. I will gladly give anyone information who writes me.

Anyone troubled with Rheumatism should write for this information as it is sent free.

* * *

Get a U. S. Government Job.

All interested should write to Franklin Institute, Dep't C 79, Rochester, N. Y., for free list of Government positions open.

* * *

Free Asthma and Hay Fever Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Bldg., St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for asthma and hay fever in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to any one who will write him for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin as fair, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and radiance to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very, small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Bialreville, Pa.

WANT ADS

POSTCARDS

ADVANCE Socially—Our Mail Way tells us how to exchange good motto and message cards (that really say something "worth while") among ladies and gentlemen everywhere. It's big, world-wide, strong and reliable. Registers new members now for a year for 25c. We start you right. Fascinating, absorbing, profitable, results assured. All fun lovers and optimists send to Advanced Correspondence Exchange, B 714 Pitcairn, Pa.

WATCHES AND JEWELRY.

NEW Watches at second hand prices. 20 Year Gold Filled Elgin or Waltham's $6.65 up. Banghart Co., Rochester, N. Y.

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

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MAIL Order Business. Big Money. No investment but postage and stationery. Full method for stamp. W. Newnham, Waukegan, Ill.

TURN Your Spare Time Into Money.—You can easily make $10 a week by acting as our representative. Write today. R. M. Place, Dept. 13, 239 N. Cap. St., Washington, D. C.

AGENTS make $30.00 weekly selling our 500 Handy Household Articles; catalogue free. Scherf Co., 1136 Wells St., Chicago.

ANCIENT Secrets; Clairvoyance, Mesmerism, Spiritualism; list for stamp. "Sentenn" 9737 Ursulines St., New Orleans.

AGENTS & Mail Dealers: Specialties that sell. Big profits. Easy sellers. No chance proposition. Success certain. Order pulling circulars furnished. Write for samples. A. F. Mankin & Co., Alexandria, Va.

HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT Post Office Examinations everywhere soon. Get prepared by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Write for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED—Active man in each locality. To join this Society. And introduce our Memberships, Sick, Accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Make $50 to $500 a month. Write. Box N L-293, Covington, Ky.

WANTED—Men and Women; for Government Positions, $60.00 month. Annual vacations. Short hours. No "layoffs." Common education sufficient. Over 12,000 appointments coming. Influence unnecessary. Farmers eligible. Send today for free list of positions open. Franklin Institute, Dep't C 31, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED—Hustler: for my Election Specialty (25c) 100, $2.50; 1,000, $20.00; sample 5c. Good either side. Taft, Roosevelt. Red Hot Parodies Classy Sketches, Rare Books, Photos, etc. F. J. LaPierre, Pensacola, Fla.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 1,00, work sent prepaid to reliable women. Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co., Dept. 17, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

MISCELLANEOUS

BARGAIN—Three fine neckties $1. Gold plated Pin free. Ties and pin retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. Name colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

SPORTING Pictures, 4 for 10c. Drugs, Books, etc. Catalog Free. Ord, Long Beach, Calif.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

DRINK HABIT—Guaranteed home treatment —three days—lifelong result. The only reliable. Book mailed free. Edw. J. Woods, 534 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

FARMS FOR SALE

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 83 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dunmage, Morgan Park, Illinois.

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WELL-KNOWN Composer Wants Song-Poems, at once. Chance for successful writers to make a fortune! All poems not available will be returned promptly. The Len Fleming Co., Suite 504 Gaiety Theater Bldg., New York City.

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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

BIG Oil Well in Oklahoma. Spouts a fortune of $1,400 every day. We sell a piece of Land and interest in a well nearby for $10. Write for book. Rex Co. 203, Pierce Building, St. Louis, Mo.

YOUR Ad placed in nearly fifty magazines 3 months, 5c per word. A. S. Mankin & Co., Alexandria, Va.

$1.00 a Week will start you in a big money-making mail order business—with the best line—in spare time. Particulars free. Antiseptic Mfg. Co., 1865 Barry avenue, Chicago.

PERSONAL

NEW book "Kate," 10c. Catalog books and den pictures free. Atoz Co., A-1, West Jefferson, Ohio.

MARRY: Catalogue with photos and descriptions Free. Pay if suited. Select Club, Dept. 674, Tekonsha, Mich.

MARRY—Many rich, congenial and anxious for companions. Interesting particulars and photo Free. The Messenger, Sta. D, Grand Rapids, Mich.

MARRY. Book of Descriptions and Photos mailed sealed FREE. The Exchange, Box 535 A., Kansas City, Mo.

MARRIAGE paper free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

MARRY—Hundreds of ladies and gentlemen will marry, many rich, highest characters, selected descriptions, names and addresses. Send 10c. Dr. Hutchison, Dept. 24, Sedalia, Mo.

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MARRY Rich—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means mailed free, sealed: either sex. Write. One may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois.

FREE Life Reading by Planets. Send birthdate. L. Zandt, Box 865, Portland, Maine.

LOVINE never fails. Every package guaranteed. Either sex 10c. Two packages sealed 20c. Union, Box 100N, Palatine, Illinois.

MARRIAGE Paper—Highest character; Incorporated; 16th year; 8,000 members; paper sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1600, Denver, Colo.

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Operating the largest organ factory in the world, employing the largest capital, buying raw material in the greatest quantity for cash—the Kimball system of manufacturing and distributing saves you $20 to $50 on strictly first-class organs.

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The most inexperienced buyer a thousand or more miles away, can deal with us as wisely as the shrewdest trader, or as though you were here in person, for your organ will be selected by an expert. Entire satisfaction is fully guaranteed. You'll not only get a good organ, but we promise that your dealings with us will be pleasant. A fine piano stool free with your Kimball Organ.

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We want to send you this magnificent 16 size, *Thin Model* 17 Jewel Elgin, fully *Adjusted to Temperature, Isochronism,* and *Three Positions*, complete with fine double strata gold case, guaranteed twenty-five years on

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PATENTS Watson E. Coleman, Washington, D. C. Books free. Highest references. Best results.

SONG-POEMS wanted. Cash or royalty to you. Needham Music House, 44-S St. Louis, Mo.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

The Good Old Way.

The Countess of Warwick, advocating votes for women at a dinner in New York, smiled and said:

"The old-fashioned, Victorian idea that only bluff, masculine, coarse things are worth while is dying out. The world realizes today that women—and men as sensitive and refined as women—also have their place.

"The old-fashioned preference for the bluff and coarse reminds me of a sea captain. This sea captain caught a sailor one morning cleaning his teeth with a toothbrush. The old man seized the brush, snapped it in two and tossed the pieces overboard. Then, his eyes flashing fire, he said:

"'What are ye tryin' to do—corrupt the ship with this here effeminacy? Cleanin' yer teeth with a toothbrush! Why, ye swab, don't ye know that when an honest sailor wants to scrape the tobacker off his grinders, he does it like a man, with a marlinspike or a link of chain cable dipped in cinders outen the cook's galley?'"

Optimistic Lincoln!

Dr. Burleigh was one of the earliest settlers of Dakota and Montana, and was a boyhood friend of Abraham Lincoln. The Doctor used to tell this Lincoln story on himself.

When Lincoln was nominated Buchanan was in Minnesota on his way to a logging camp. He laughed at the thought of Lincoln running for President, and went into the woods. He stayed in the woods until the following summer; when he came out he found that Lincoln had not only been elected but inaugurated.

Burleigh hurried to Washington and demanded a job.

"What kind of a place do you want?" asked President Lincoln.

"Any kind—where there's hot much work and big pay."

"I'm afraid," smiled Lincoln, "that most of those jobs are gone. I'll have my secretary look round and see what we can find for you. Come back tomorrow."

Burleigh went back.

"Burleigh," said President Lincoln, "there isn't much left. The best thing I can offer you is the agency of the Yankton Sioux Indians. It pays fifteen hundred dollars a year."

"But, sir," expostulated Burleigh, "a man can't live on that salary! I'd either have to starve to death or rob the Government."

"Well, Burleigh," replied the President, "you'll never starve to death!"

Looking for Work.

The laziest man in the village was actually running, and running hard.

On, on he ran, until—crash—he landed plump into the portly vicar.

"What—what is the matter?" gasped the reverend gentleman in astonishment

"Can't stop, sir!" came the hurried reply. "I've just heard of some work."

"And you have got the job?" asked the vicar, interestedly.

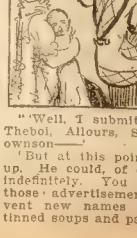
"Don't know, sir; just goin' to see."

"What is it?" asked the clergyman, in amazement.

"Some washin' for my wife!"

Name Manufacturers.

At a dinner in New York, William Ray Gardiner, the advertising expert, scored neatly off an advertising fad that has of late been rather overdone.



"A young couple," he began, "had been blessed with the advent of a little son, and the wife, at dinner one evening, said

"'What shall we name our darling, Jim?'

"Jim wrinkled his brow and replied.

"'Well, I submit Childa, Firstbornio, Theboi, Allours, Sunne, Ourown, Ourowson——'

"But at this point his wife shut him up. He could, of course, have kept on indefinitely. You see, he was one of those advertisement writers, who invent new names for breakfast foods, tinned soups and patent medicines."

The Coming Shock.

William M. Chase, at the recent sale of his pictures in New York, said to a reporter:

"Yes, these are all good things, things collected with great care. You can't comment on them as the teacher once commented on the pupil's drawing.

"'I draw what I see,' the pupil said complacently.

"'Well, the shock will come,' the teacher answered, 'when you see what you have drawn.'"

An Unexpected Reply.

It was at the target practice of the local company of territorials, and one of the officers was suitably holding forth on the matter in hand.

Sauntering swaggeringly up to the latest recruit, he said:

"See here, my man, this thing is a rifle. Hefe is the barrel, there the stock. You slip the cartridge in here. The [illegible] was [illegible] ing exceedingly displeased.

"Now, captain," the officer, "now put the weapon down, carefully. These little things are the latest sights. When you have taken accurate aim, pull this little thing, which is the trigger."

The company began to smile.

"Now, remember what I have told you. Shoulder up and look more like a soldier!" was to the captain, seeking to make a further impression. "By the way, what is your business? A clerk, I suppose?"

"No, sir," came the reply; "I am only a gunsmith."

Their Worth.

The girl had demanded her letters back and he was shipping them by express.

"Valuation?" said the clerk.

"What's that?"

"Valuation: What are the contents of this package worth?"

"Put it at thirty cents," answered the young fellow, with a scowl.

Heard on the Common.

First Newsboy (urging his chum on)—Don't be a quitter! Go on an' lick him.

Second Newsboy—I won't neither. I've got two black eyes now, and that's enough.

First Newsboy—Well, what's de matter wid ye? Go on in; he can't give yer any more can, can he?

Patience Gave Out at Last.

More than one story has been told about the lawlessness and disorderliness of the feudists of the Southern mountains. This one the Philadelphia Times tells as having been related by a clergyman of Kentucky, who has worked for many years among these neglected hill people.

There had been a family reunion, which terminated in a free-for-all fight. The officers were taken before the local justice of the peace, who questioned an old woman as to the particulars of the fight. Her description was typical of the mountaineer's attitude toward strife and bloodshed.

"Well, Judge," she said, "Jem Louis got into an argument with Hank Budd. Budd smashed Jem over the head with a stick of cord wood, and busted his head open.

"Then Jem's brother slashed Hank up with a butcher knife, and Lou Barry shot him through the leg.

"Larry Stover went at Lou with an ax, and then Judge, we just naturally got to fighting."

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Can you afford to be without it? Can you afford to spend 10 dollars when you can get more and better groceries for 8 dollars—or can you afford to spend 12 instead of 12 dollars, 25 instead of 20 dollars, 50 instead of 40 dollars? Can you afford to do this when you might be saving from 2 to 10 dollars?

You know that you can not—but that is exactly what you are doing if you pay three or four profits to small dealers.

This book represents the World's Largest Retail Grocery Store. It gives money saving quotations on the very finest food products of all kinds. It shows you new and better food supplies. Besides, it has several pages of wonderful bargains on a variety of merchandise.

It is issued every two months. In every issue you find new and novel grocery items, a new list of special bargains—all the necessary staple groceries—at the lowest prices—at prices that mean at least a saving of one-fifth to you.

Will you send that little coupon and send for the bargains? Send it now and we will put you on our mailing list to receive this value-giving grocery list every two months.

Clip this coupon, sign it, mail it at once!!

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Chicago Ave. Bridge, CHICAGO
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Safety Razor $1

$5.00 Value for

This is the opening announcement of a Safety Razor which is just being put on the market—the **first $5 value Safety Razor ever sold for $1.** Think of it! Never till now could you get an elegant, durable, sanitary safety razor for less than $5.00. Silver plated. Solid handle. Sanitary guard. Blades finest Norwegian steel, rolled in Sheffield, hollow ground. Very best razor value. Razor and 7 blades in handsome, flexible, grained leather case (handy for vest pocket) only $1. Good as the costliest safety razor made. Send $1 and get razor at once. Guaranteed absolutely satisfactory or money returned. Address

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1 Full Glass Jug, 84 Ounces Lakewood 100 Proof Straight Whiskey $1.10

Think of it—over 50 good drinks of the finest, smoothest, mellowest, richest tasting whiskey you ever drank in your life for only $1.10—just a fraction over 2c a drink! Fully aged, absolutely pure and full 100 proof strength. Your money back if not satisfied. Send order today. Don't send personal checks.

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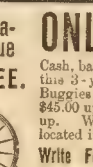

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For purity, strength and flavor, *Ullman's Whiskey* cannot be equaled. The first drink will convince you we are right. To induce you to try it, we offer, absolutely free, with first order, a bottle of *Dixie Cheer*, a beverage of surpassing quality, and a miniature bottle of rare *Athletic Club Whiskey*. Here is our wonderful offer:

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4 Full Quart Bottles Ullman's Whiskey $2.85

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ONE BOTTLE DIXIE CHEER 1 Sample Old Athletic Club; with each 4 Quart Order for ULLMAN'S WHISKEY FREE

EXPRESS PREPAID

Now! Send remittance for $2.85 and we will ship you express prepaid—four full quart bottles *Ullman's Reserve Stock Whiskey*, one bottle *Dixie Cheer*, and a sample bottle of *Athletic Club*; or remit us $5.00 and we will send you eight full quarts *Ullman's Reserve Stock Whiskey* with two free bottles *Dixie Cheer* and two bottles *Athletic Club*—express prepaid. Test the whiskey, by drinking all you please; if not delighted just return it to us and we will at once refund your money. All goods shipped in plain sealed package. Do not fail to take advantage of this wonderful "just-in-order-to-prove" offer. *Order today!*

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DON'T CUT OUT VARICOSE VEINS

But reduce them, stop pain and inflammation with

ABSORBINE JR.

A mild, safe, antiseptic, discutient, resolvent liniment, and a proven remedy for this and similar troubles. Mr. H. C. Kellogg, Becket, Mass., before using this remedy, suffered intensely with painful and inflamed veins; they were swollen, knotted and hard. He writes: "After using one and one-half bottles of ABSORBINE, JR., the veins were reduced, inflammation and pain gone, and I have had no recurrence of the trouble during the past six years." Also removes Goitre, Painful Swellings, Hydrocele, Varicocele, Bruises, "Black and Blue" discolorations, etc., in a pleasant manner. Book 7 F free. Price $1.00 4-oz., $2.00 12-oz. bottle at druggists or delivered. W. F. YOUNG, P. D. F., 337 Temple St., Springfield, Mass.

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The quick, harmless, medicinal wonder—stops pain instantly—takes out the corn, roots and all, in 24 hours. To prove it send 2c stamp for full size 10c package and valuable book—"Care of the Feet" ALL FREE. Do it now. SCHOLL MFG. CO., 209 Central Union Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL. Largest Mfrs. of Foot Specialties in the World.

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Cured by ANTI-FLAMMA Poultice Plaster. Stops the itching around sore. Cures while you work. DESCRIBE CASE and get FREE SAMPLE. Bayles Co., 1824 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, Mo.

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PATENTABLE IDEAS in Big Demand. My patents protect. Terms liberal. Fees now. "The Truth About Patents" sent free. Jas. E. Mansfield, Dept. F, Washington, D. C.

Catching the Smugglers;

Or, Frank Coke's Bravery

By William Ressman Andrews

[Copyright 1912 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

CHAPTER I.

HIS AWFUL DISCOVERY.

KEEP up your courage and I'll save you!"

There was no response. "Strange," muttered the speaker. "Of all times for a person to reply, it is when he is in grave peril. Hello! Don't you hear me?"

All was quiet.

Once more the speaker raised his voice.

"Tell me; can you hear me?"

The only answer was the lapping of the waves against the smooth surface of the rocky Maine coast.

Although the person speaking had said that he would save somebody, the one addressed had not asked him, in the first place, to be rescued. Yet there was a person whose life was in danger, near the speaker.

Frank Coke, a young fellow still in his teens, had been yelling thus excitedly at the unresponsive stranger. He was a strong-limbed boy who, a few days before, had left the house of Hiram Stoker, his guardian, under unusual circumstances.

Stoker was a hard-fisted man of middle age, who hadn't a friend in Tomkinsville, but plenty of enemies. Everybody wondered upon the death of Frank's father why he had made the snarly, sinister and repellent Stoker custodian of the fortune that was to become Frank's at his majority. The villagers predicted the time when Stoker would try to deprive the boy of his rightful inheritance. Money was Stoker's god, and judging from some of his sharp practice in numerous home deals, he would not be particular how he got his hands on Frank's money so long as he got it.

Nevertheless, the guardianship became Stoker's. The man had always treated Frank well while the boy's father was alive, and Frank never knew of any time that the two men did not get on amicably. But after the funeral everything changed like magic. Stoker came out in his true colors. He acted harshly toward the boy and showed a profound dislike for him. The unjust treatment became unbearable, and Frank's spirit rebelled.

Many strange things had taken place, too, at this time, which affected the boy in a peculiar way. After he went to his guardian's house to live, he heard some one trying to get into his room from the roof of the veranda in the dead of night.

There wasn't anything in the house to tempt a thief, as everybody knew how barely the place was furnished. Frank had wakened in time to scare off the intruder. But the person, in his haste to get away, left under the window a few articles that made the boy shudder when he realized what they were for. There was a long knife, like a stiletto, a chloroform bottle, and a sponge.

"Ugh! I woke up just in time," said Frank, examining them with a feeling of horror.

In the morning he showed the articles to his guardian, but that individual did not appear to consider the matter in the same light as the boy. "Whoever brought them along did it only for effect, in case he got caught at his work of trying to rob the house," said Stoker. But strange to say, a little later, when Frank happened to turn around suddenly from the mantelpiece where he put the articles, he saw a look of hatred on Stoker's face. "Why is that?" thought the boy. He did not dare to question himself any longer. Yet it did not seem reasonable that Stoker would dare——

Frank broke off his meditations and left for school that day. Coming back a little earlier than usual, the boy had found the house empty. This was not out of the ordinary. But the silence unnerved him. The place seemed to be different. It had an uncanny feeling.

"Where is my guardian?" he asked himself.

He wanted to know, yet something made him feel that he should not know for his own good. He tried to shake off the feeling, but it still clung to the very marrow of his being. As a relief he wanted to make a noise. He thought of making the excuse to call his guardian. But some restraining influence gripped his vocal chords. Later he felt grateful for it; for he was on the verge of a horrifying discovery in which silence was his salvation.

Gently he walked through the hall. Instinctively he moved with a catlike tread. It was well that he did so, for he might never have left the house alive!

The rooms seemed close. He imagined he could not get his breath. He wanted to cough to find out if he were really choking in a stifling atmosphere, or whether his imagination was making havoc with his nerves. For all that he could not turn back. Invisible strings seemed to be dragging him onward—perhaps to his fate. The intangible something about the house's present condition got on his sensitive nerves.

"What is it that makes me feel this way?" he said to himself.

By this time he had tiptoed into the diningroom. Suddenly the silence was broken by a slight sound. He stopped and listened. It was a tap, tap, tap!

At first he thought it might be a woodpecker on a tree in the garden, but it was not that. He listened again. The sound came from the inside of the house. He was inclined to think it caused by a mouse in the walls. But that theory was entertained only for a second and then dismissed.

Where did it come from? he asked himself. Was it the floor above or any of the rooms off the diningroom? No.

Finally he located it. The faint tap, tap, falling upon his ears with such regularity, came from beneath his feet. The cellar.

He crept to the door opening below. Something still cautioned him not to make a noise. Carefully he lifted the latch, then stealthily drew back the wooden door itself.

A dim light stole out. Evidently some one had come to the cellar. In that case it must be his guardian. There was no one in the house beside themselves, as the one servant employed had been allowed to go a week before.

Frank moved softly to the landing. Here he stopped and listened. Yes; the tap, tap, came from the cellar. Still he was not sure what caused the noise. He could not see anything or who was responsible for the sound.

Tap, tap, tap! It came with a regularity that merged into a dead monotony of soft, even beats in a yielding substance. Occasionally a sharp click struck the listener's ears. It sounded like steel striking a pebble.

Overcome with dreadful curiosity, Frank leaned forward to see and hear better. He dropped softly to his knees and peered. The cellar was dark except for the rays of a lantern at one end. In its smoky light a bent figure was seen. The man was Stoker. He was too busy at his self-appointed task to notice any interruption. Stoker was industriously digging. The tap, tap, came from his pick in the earth bottom of the cellar.

Frank craned his neck to see what the man was so busy about. There was a long trench, and Stoker had sunk it to nearly three feet. The boy gazed fascinated with horror at the sight, for the trench looked like the dim, uncanny light like a grave. He remembered the knife and chloroform, and the man's looks when he put them on the mantelpiece.

Suddenly Frank clutched his throat in a panic of maddening fear. He was frozen to the spot with terror as a light broke upon him. With eyes glued to the cellar floor, he realized that the grave was his own length!

CHAPTER II.

IN THE ORCHARD.

"Cheese it! Here comes the old boy who owns the apples!"

"Oh, I see him, all right!"

"Beat it for the hole in the fence, or we'll get a whalin'; that farmer has blood in his eye."

The speakers were two boys in an apple orchard a few miles on the main road to Tompkinsville. Frank Coke heard the words, and could see the young boys through the picket fence. He stopped and watched them.

On they ran, with pockets full of large, luscious apples which had just been shaken down from the trees. At the other end of the orchard, and coming with long strides from a farmhouse, was the owner. He had observed the young culprits making their haul, and fired with indignation at their audacity in shaking the trees instead of being content with the windfalls on the ground, he went after them with a horsewhip in his hand.

"Hey, there, you young scamps!" cried the farmer. "Just wait until I lay hands on you. I'll teach you to steal apples."

It was these words which had called forth the above conversation. The farmer was not a mean man, and would not have objected to the boys' taking away a pocketful of apples, lying in the grass under the trees. He did not take his dog along, for he felt that he

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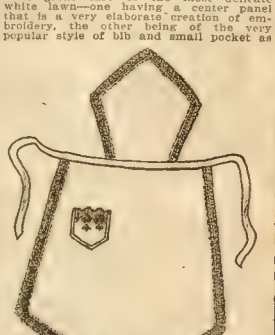

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could catch the boys before they had a chance to slip through the fence. There was only one place where they could get through, and he calculated on reaching the exit before the fugitives. But in this he reckoned without them. The boys had helped themselves to forbidden fruit before, and realized the necessity of seeing, like a good general, that a way is left clear for retreat if victory is not certain.

On they ran as fast as they could go. At first the farmer gained on them, but gradually the boys left him behind and reached the fence. Both tried to get through at the same time. The opening was only large enough to admit the passage of one small body at once. Each bent on escape, forgot the other, and made a dive for the exit. They stuck in the middle and could not get in or out.

The farmer saw in the distance their plight. They seemed like rats caught in a trap, and he felt so sure of getting them, he stopped and laughed. After the first spasm he grasped the horse-whip, thinking of the fun he was going to have bringing it down on the trousers' seats of the unfortunate boys.

They kicked and squirmed, but their efforts were unavailing. The more they struggled, the less chance they seemed to have of getting through.

"Wish I didn't try to get those apples," groaned one.

"Me neither," gasped the other. "I can get a lickin' at home without having to go to somebody's orchard for it."

The farmer stood still in the middle of the orchard surveying them with a broad grin, not attempting to come nearer. He seemed to think that anticipation in giving a person a licking afforded more satisfaction than realization. He just watched the boys continue their kicking and squirming.

"Ha, ha!" he exclaimed. "Got fast in the fence, hey? Well, that's what you get for trying to steal my apples. Guess I'll go back and get the dog to sic on yer. How would you like that?"

"Please don't, mister," pleaded one of the small boys. "We won't take any more apples."

The farmer grinned as he looked at the kicking legs and struggling arms, and above all the new knickerbockers the boys had on. "Guess my dog Tige will like to bite a hole in them new trousers of yourn," he jeered. "Tige always did like fresh pieces of cloth for souvenirs of the apple season."

These words were greeted with wails from the captives, who had visions of the dog getting too close to them for comfort before they were able to free themselves.

It wasn't so many years since Frank had sometimes looked longingly at luscious apples in a neighbor's orchard, and his heart went out in sympathy to the younger boys whose innocent, healthful appetite for one of nature's finest fruits had led them astray.

"They shouldn't get a beating," he murmured, the moment he saw their plight. "They've been punished enough by the scare he is giving them. I'll try to help them out."

He came closer to the fence and waved to the farmer. "Say, mister, let them go this time, will you? I'm sure they don't mean any harm. I'll pay for the apples they have taken."

A sudden change came over the farmer. He walked toward the fence and gazed at the speaker.

"Well, boy, you got a good heart," he said, kindly. "I'll let 'em go this time. Never mind the money. They ain't taken enough that needs paying for. Fust I was going to teach 'em a lesson; and I must say they deserve it for shaking good market apples from the trees."

"It was done thoughtlessly," said Frank in kindly tones.

"I know that," assented the farmer. "But that kind of work means loss of money. It's injuring my business. Now, if they would take what falls on the ground, so that they ain't wasting my good crop, there's no harm done. I ain't a stingy man, and I remember I was a boy myself once. But you see what damage a heedless youngster can do without meaning no harm?"

Frank shook his head affirmatively, for he saw the justice of the farmer's point of view.

The farmer went on: "When a boy takes just enough apples to eat himself and ain't carting them away by the wholesale, no one is going to object. But it's the other thing that gits my goat."

"True," said Frank. "But I'm sure that these boys will remember what you say and act accordingly in the future." He turned to the uneasy culprits. "Isn't that so?"

"Yes; we will not forget what you say," they replied, eagerly. "Only please don't give us a licking this time!"

The farmer and Frank could not help smiling at the plaintive plea.

"Well, if you promise to be good and only take a handful of windfalls when you feel apple hungry, I'll not paddle the dust out of your new trousers." There was a twinkle in his eye, as the farmer came to the fence and released the boys from their uncomfortable position.

Then with another warning, given in a kindly tone, he told them to go on their way. He turned to Frank.

"I like the look of yer, boy," he said, pleasantly. "Who are you, may I ask?"

"Frank Coke," was the reply.

The farmer drew back in astonishment.

"You don't say," he exclaimed.

"You seem to know me, though I don't remember seeing you before," said Frank.

"That may be," declared the farmer. "But I have heard so much about yer I feels as though I know you. And I sympathize with you, too."

A look of astonishment swept over the young man's face. "What for?" he asked.

The farmer gave him another compassionate glance.

"'Cause I've heard how badly you are treated," was the solemn answer.

"What about?" asked Frank, with a start. For the instant he supposed that the farmer had seen the grave in the cellar the night before. But the next moment he saw how impossible that was. Frank had told no one of his grewsome discovery.

"News travels far in the country, lad," the farmer went on. "I've heard all about the way you have been treated by Hiram Stoker since the death of your father."

"He hasn't been kind to me," said Frank. He said nothing, however, about his graver fears.

"I knew your father, lad. He was a good man."

The words brought a lump to Frank's throat.

The farmer then suddenly asked him a question somewhat startling.

"Where you going? You are a long way from Tompkinsville."

"I don't know," answered Frank, candidly.

The boy did not know. As yet he had only made up his mind to get as far away from his guardian as he could. Where he would eventually go and what he would do had not occurred to him. He realized, of course, that he would have to do something for a living; but the horror of his discoveries in his guardian's house were too much for him to think of anything else just then.

"Well," laughed the farmer; "that's funny. Here you're going somewhere but yer don't know where. Ain't going to walk around the world?" He grinned at his joke; but Frank felt pretty serious.

The farmer saw that something was on Frank's mind and looked grave. Then he looked at the boy with a shrewd glance.

"Ain't run away from Stoker's? Guess you have. But I don't blame you. Would do it myself if I had to live with such a crabbed skinflint. There ain't nothin' good he does, I can tell you."

Frank's face showed that he approved every word.

"I'm glad, boy, you have decided to go away from Stoker, as, to my mind, he's a bad egg."

The farmer glanced at the ground and muttered half aloud: "Yes; he needs watching, he needs watching!"

Frank wanted to tell the farmer what he knew about Stoker and his suspicions of the man's intentions toward himself. But on second thought he decided not to say anything. There was no proof, and he realized that a mere accusation would do no good. But the farmer evidently had his suspicions of Stoker or

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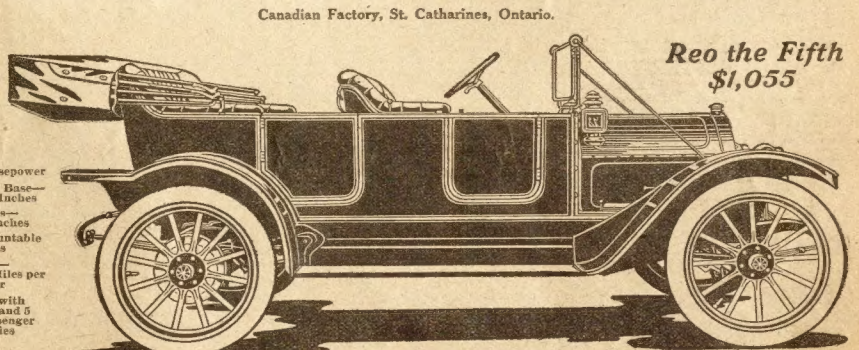

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why had he expressed approval of Frank's leaving, and then muttered words of mysterious significance?

The farmer looked up.

"What are you going to work at?" he asked point-blank.

"Haven't decided yet." Then he stopped in thought a moment. "Think I'll strike out for some city and try to get a start in business."

"Will you let your guardian know where you are?" asked the farmer.

A deep furrow appeared suddenly across the boy's brow.

"No, I'll not," he said, emphatically.

"Never?"

The inquiry was innocent enough, but it held a hidden meaning.

"Never, as long as I live," said Frank.

A strange look came into the farmer's eye.

"He's your guardian, ain't he?"

"Yes."

"Wall," drawled the farmer, his shrewd eyes looking straight at Frank, "nobody's appointed guardian except when money's left to come to a person later, when he gits of age."

A vague, uncomfortable feeling crept over the boy.

"Yes; that's so," he answered.

The same knowing look was in the farmer's face.

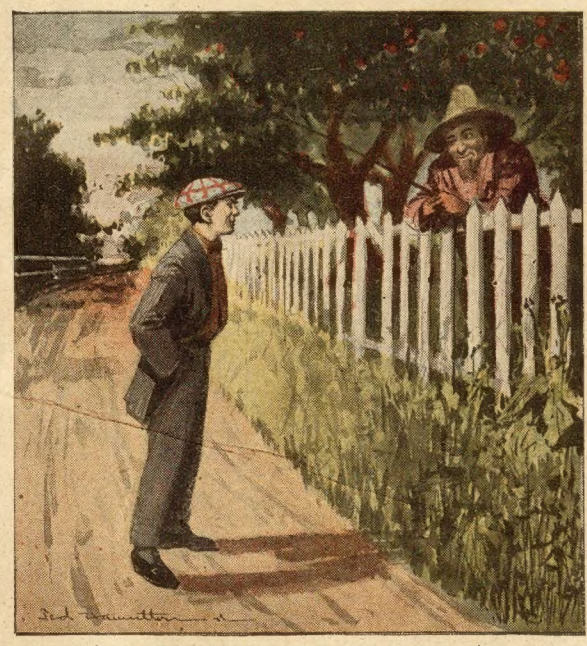
"Nobody runs away from a guardian, never expecting to come back, when he knows that he is to get money some time, except when something has happened to make him afraid."

The words seemed like fortune-telling, and a chill came over the listener. What did the farmer suspect, or was it just a case of a keen mind making a shrewd guess?

Frank did not answer, and make a clean breast of his affairs, though he realized that the farmer meant to be friendly to him. What he had seen in the cellar was too horrible to talk about just then, even with a person disposed to interest himself in the troubles of a strange boy, alone in the world.

"Well, perhaps you don't feel like talking about your affairs now," said the farmer. "I see something is on your mind. But remember this: Matthew Perkins—that's me—will be a friend to you in a time of need. If things git worse than they are now, let me know. Your father was a fine honorable man and I know his son must be a chip of the old block. There's my hand on it!"

And the hearty, honest old fellow thrust out his hand in a grasp of well-meaning protection toward the lonely boy.



"If things git worse than they are now, let me know!"

CHAPTER III.

ON THE CLIFF'S BRINK.

Frank went on his way with a feeling of gratitude in his heart. There was somebody at last who would be a friend, if case of need. The time for seeking the protection of that friend was not, however, at hand. Frank was determined to make his way in the world without any help, if possible. Still, the consciousness of Matthew Perkins' interest was certainly a comfort.

"I'm going to try to make good, so he can see that I am a chip of the old block," he muttered as he trudged along the dusty road toward Portland.

Frank had left the main highway, to avoid being overtaken if his guardian should harness up the buggy in the barn and seek the fugitive. For two days he had walked, as he wanted to make what little money he had last as long as possible until he should get employment in the city.

The money was pitifully small for his purpose, yet his inexperience prevented him from realizing how soon it would dwindle to nothing. Frank had slept in haymows and eaten sparingly of bread and cheese in an effort to keep his little fund intact. The money consisted of a few dollars he had found on the mantelpiece at Hiram Stoker's when he left the house.

The moment Frank realized what Stoker was doing in the cellar, his mind flew back to the intruder on the veranda and the knife and chloroform he found after the man's hasty exit. Then he rushed to his room and packed up all the clothes he could carry in a bundle light enough to hold on his arm. After that he took the money.

In a few minutes Frank was out of the house, speeding across lots, jumping fences with the agility of a hunter, and hurrying, breathless and headlong, into the free, open country. His only thought was to get out of sight before the wicked guardian should suspect that he had left, never to return.

It was now four days later when Frank uttered the words that opened this story. He was on a lonely part of the road running along the seacoast, and miles from any house. Frank had been traveling at night, to avoid being seen. He had a feeling that he was being pursued. Yet when he stopped to reason it out with himself, he saw that Stoker had no occasion for trying to bring him back; rather the contrary seemed likely.

As Frank walked along silently in the moonlight, he suddenly heard a cry of distress. Was it a woman? He listened again. No; but it sounded as if it might be a boy or a young man in trouble. Frank was unable to locate him.

This was partly due to the waves breaking on the shelving rocks along the roadside. Just as he thought everything quiet enough for him to catch the exact location of the appealing cry, a huge wave would break on a projecting rock near the shore, casting spray and foam on the road above.

"Where is the person?" said Frank, impatiently. "Some one is in distress, and I must help him."

He ran up and down the road for several yards, listening at various points, to catch the cry. But his efforts were unavailing for some time. He was almost in despair of even hearing the person again, much less locating him, when there came another cry—this time full of terror and desperation.

It was then that Frank shouted: "Keep up your courage and I'll save you!" But there was no response.

A cold perspiration broke out on his forehead; the whole thing seemed so uncanny. Frank had been in touch with so many uncanny things in the last few days, he was not anxious to have any more harrowing experiences repeated.

"Perhaps," he thought, "I don't hear right. It might be a joke of some boy who has an exaggerated sense of fun."

Just then the cry rent the air again.

"That's real; I'm sure of that," mut-

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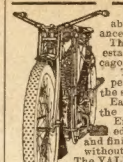

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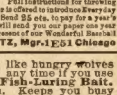

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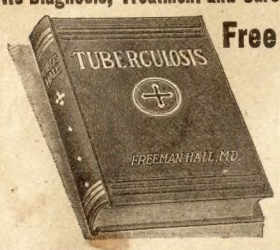

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tered Frank. "But where is the person in distress? Hang it! how can I try to rescue him when he won't tell me where he is?" He experienced a slight feeling of anger, he was left so impotent in his projected rescue work.

Once more the cry sounded on his ears. Fortunately he got some idea of its location.

His attention was directed to a long, pointed ridge of rock running a quarter of a mile from the coastline into the open sea. He felt sure that the person needing help was somewhere on its barren, slippery sides. There seemed to be no means of reaching the end. The rocky spur rose from the dashing waters to a hundred feet and met at the top like the back of a razor-back hog.

There was no road, and it was likely there was hardly a footpath along its treacherous sides. Evidently no one lived on the bleak, rocky ridge of the earth rising gloomily out of the Atlantic Ocean. The black sides of the grisly promontory sent a shudder through his frame, it looked so repelling—just the place to be selected by conscienceless villains to carry out their fell purposes.

Frank felt that the cry came from some one in the power of just such scoundrels. But where in that quarter of a mile was the person in peril? The young man peered along the ledges, expecting to see the helpless individual caught by the tide on one of the treacherous spots. But the next moment he saw that this was not the case. The tide was falling instead of coming in.

Running out on the promontory, jumping here and there wherever he could find a safe foothold, Frank explored crevices and declivities of its dangerous, jagged face. Presently he came to an opening into the sea which looked like a cave. He bent over the top, but could not see anything. The waves swished against the rocks, their crests reflecting in the moonlight. As Frank stretched out on his stomach to look over the side for a glimpse of the cave, he heard a groan.

And it was the cry of a human being. "Help!" exclaimed Frank at the top of his voice.

"Help, help!" came the faint, responsive cry.

At last he had found the person in peril. The tones seemed low and muffled, like one talking through a handkerchief, and physically exhausted at that. The sound came from the cave.

"Where are you?" asked Frank.

"Down here," was the answer in feeble tones.

"How can I get to you?" asked Frank.

"Don't know; haven't been up above."

"How did you get where you are—I can't see you?"

"I'm in the cave, and if I'm not rescued in a short time I'll never see the light of tomorrow."

Frank shivered. "Yes, I understand. But tell me some way I can get to you, and I'll try to rescue you."

"I'm helpless, and don't know where I am."

"Tell me something, quick, and then I'll know best what to do," said Frank.

"I'm bound hand and foot on a raft, with a chain attached to a ring in the roof of the cave, around my neck. When the tide goes out I will be left suspended in the air."

"Then I must get you out of the predicament right away," said Frank.

"But how, I wonder?" asked the unknown from the invisible depths of the dark cavern. "I can't direct my own release. But for Heaven's sake do something for me. It will have to be done soon, too. The tide is almost out. Won't be long before the raft drops from under me."

Frank's mind was taking everything in swiftly, and he was looking around to see if there was a boat near by which he could use in getting to the prisoner. But even so, he would need a file to separate the chain from the ring in the roof.

Frank hastily explained to the imprisoned man his intention of seeking a boat and somebody who had a file.

"That will take hours perhaps, and by that time I'll be dead," said the man. "Can't you think of some quicker and more certain way?"

His tone was pleading. Yet it was not the voice of a coward. "Whose voice would not shake under the circumstances?" thought Frank.

After a moment's cogitation, he called out.

"How is the chain fastened to the ring in the roof?" he asked.

"By a lock," came the quick reply. "The men who left me here drew the end of the chain through the ring and snapped a padlock over two of the links."

A spark of hope flew up in Frank's breast, and he thought that he could offer encouragement to the captive.

"Is it one of the ordinary iron padlocks used for coal bins and outhouses, where things are generally pretty safe?"

"Yes, it could be easily picked," said the man in the cave.

"Well, then I think I can get you out of there soon," said Frank, cheerfully.

"Yes? How?"

"I've got a bunch of keys in my pocket. Some of them ought to fit such an easy lock. Anyway, I happen to have a piece of wire. That can be used to pick the lock, if the keys fail," declared Frank.

"Thank Heaven, there seems a chance for me to get out of this with my life," exclaimed the prisoner.

"Well, then, here goes," said Frank. "The next thing is to find a footing down the steep sides of this rock."

He looked around. The surface was almost smooth, the waves had washed and worn it for so many ages in the past. Not only was it difficult to find his way down to the water's edge, but there did not seem to be any way to get back after he had released the man in the cave.

What was he to do? A coward would have said, "Self-preservation is the law of nature," and left the man to his fate. But Frank Coke was not that kind. He intended to rescue the helpless captive, boy though he was, or perish in the attempt.

Then he thought of his own recent peril. "Perhaps God has spared me so I can be of use to some one in greater trouble than myself," he reflected.

With manly courage he got ready to help the man below, without again thinking of the consequences—if there were to be any. He stripped off all except his underclothes, and put the keys and wire in his mouth. His coat, trousers, and vest were left in a heap on the bare rocks. In them was a pocketbook containing some papers, memoranda of private matters, and a letter or two with the envelopes containing his name and address. And there was the money, too.

The place was so lonely it was not likely that any one was going to pass at that hour of the night, he thought. Consequently he left his things right in plain sight on the cliff. Certainly he would be back soon. After swimming to the rescue he and the prisoner would find breaks in the side of the rock enabling them to get foothold enough to reach the top.

When Frank tried to get down to the water below him, he found no stepping place. Running along for several yards he finally saw a less steep declivity. Here and there he could see by the aid of the moonlight small stone projections sticking out irregularly. But some of them were so far apart he was obliged to hold on with both hands the full length of his arms, and then drop cautiously to the ledge underneath.

But he was glad of finding even these. He did not stop to think how far apart the ledges were, nor ask if he could stand on one and reach the next above his head, when he tried to come back. He was engrossed with the one thought now: A human life is in peril. I must rescue the man facing death in the agony of a slow but inevitable doom."

He felt confident of making the rescue, where strength was needed. Frank was a hard-muscled youth for his age, and would have no difficulty in performing any feat that meant strong physical exertion.

Cautiously he lowered himself from ledge to ledge, after he had shouted a word of encouragement to the prisoner in the cave, so that the poor fellow would not think that he had been deserted, while Frank was silently swimming to his rescue.

The water was as warm as if it were summertime. The brave youth finally touched the cool, liquid surface with his toes. He hung on the last ledge a moment and located the mouth of the cave. It was two hundred yards away. The moonlight failed to show any sandy beach, indicating shallow water near the cave entrance.

Frank judged that all along this point the depth was over a man's head. The captive had spent a number of terrible torturing hours, as he watched the water gradually sink away from the high-tide mark of the slimy cavern walls.

There was a gentle splash. The next moment could be heard the easy, confident stroke of a good swimmer. Frank was on his way to the rescue.

This thrilling story of youthful struggles and adventures will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. A lot of strange and exciting things happen. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

noticed the lowering glances of a Spaniard whom they always seemed to encounter. For a long time both men ignored the dark looks with which he favored them, until, one day, he purposely jostled them. Doctor Ferguson, who was very abrupt in his actions, and who happened to be nearest to the impertinent stranger, threw up a hand to clear his path. He caught the Spaniard under the chin, and they could hear his teeth snap together.

"There," said the Doctor, indignantly, "that will hold the impertinent beggar for a while."

"Caramba! You shall pay for this," they heard him mutter, as they walked away.

"I can't help thinking I've seen that man in the States," Jerome said, thoughtfully.

The Doctor looked incredulous. "I hardly think so," he returned. "He looks familiar because we have seen him everywhere down here. But I wonder what there is about us that offends him."

That night, in the diningroom of the hotel, Jerome met the man face to face. It was the first time he had see him in evening clothes, and the young minister felt more than ever that he had previously seen the Spaniard somewhere. The latter saw Jerome at once, for he approached and scrutinized him from head to foot with insulting audacity. He was a heavy man of thirty, with cruel, gleaming eyes. For a second they held each other's gaze. The look of the Spaniard was a challenge. In spite of his rudeness, the man's appearance was distinguished.

Jerome, more puzzled than ever, turned away, and presently he saw his emeny—for such he believed him to be—leave the room.

The continuation of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

The Man—I heard when Archie calls on Mazette he sits like a statue.

The Maid—When Mazette's pa is around he's more like a moving picture.

* * *

An Old One.

"Why, man, you have no sense of humor. When I first heard that joke I laughed till my sides ached."

"So did I."

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THE FAIRY CORNER

THREE WISHES.

Edgar, Eli, and Eugene
Went one day a-fishing.
Long they fished without a bite—
Then they fell to wishing.

Edgar said: "I wish that I
Had a ton of candy—
Chocolate drops and caramels,
Wouldn't that be dandy!"

Eli next wished for a horse
And a lot of money
And a playhouse full of toys—
A barrel, too, of honey.

"Bait, more bait," cried wise Eugene,
"Bait to tempt those fishes.
I care more for angleworms,
Now, than for your wishes."

"What a wish!" exclaimed the two,
But Eugene, more plucky,
Went and dug the worms and then
Soon became more lucky.

Thus Gene made his wish come true
While the others waited;
He caught fish galore, while they
Wished, with hooks unbaited.

A Decided Fall.

They were building a bridge in Pittsburgh, and Mike Miller was the boy who carried drinking water to the workers. Mike walked all over the structure without fear, but he became too sure of himself. He fell off. Suppose you should fall from the seventh or eighth story of an office building. That would be a pretty big drop. It was a 90-foot fall that Mike took, and at the end of it he went into the river. The water was deep, and Mike happened to hit it so that the blow that it gave him back when he struck did not hurt him much. He was pulled out of the water by a workman and dried off in the engine house, while the men for whom he had carried water searched around the place and got him some clothes to wear.

In Far-off Lapland.

The Lapps have a custom that insures a small property to their children. When a baby is born they set aside a reindeer and keep it and all its young until the child is grown and then the herd is turned over unconditionally to the boy or girl. Fond parents also give a reindeer to the nurse or person who first discovers the baby has a tooth.

A game the Lapp youngsters play is amusing. All the children get on their knees in a ring; then they hold their toes with their hands and move by jumps. The one who can jump fastest without letting go his toes wins the game. The mistakes that occur are never serious, but are ludicrous as the children go hopping about.

Obeying.

When you are inclined not to mind mother or teacher turn in your beloved "Jungle Book" and read:

"Now, there are the laws of the Jungle,
And many and mighty are they.
But the head and the hoof of the law
And the haunch and the hump is—Obey!"

Obedience is the first law of nature and extends to all living things. Some children think they must obey their parents just because the parents say so, but that is not the reason; they must obey when they are young so that they may learn self-control and help to build character for themselves.

A TIMOROUS TOAD.

A toad who hopped this way and that
Untimely hopped against a cat.
The cat rose up with awful mien,
Which scared the toad to a smithereen.

Tot Wit.

"Mamma," said a small miss of 5, "I don't think Nellie is a suitable name for my dollie."

"Why not?" queried the mother.

"'Cause she's so loose jointed," answered the little one, "I think I'd better call her Lucy."

—

"Mamma," queried small Edgar, "how many ends are there to a stick of candy?"

"Two of course," was the reply.

"That's funny," mused the little fellow. "I have bitten off three or four ends, and there are two left yet."

—

Small Sadie startled the guests at a dinner when a finger bowl was placed before her by asking: "Mamma, where's the soap?"

—

The small daughter of a physician was told by her father that he would have to whip her for disobedience. "All right, papa," she said, "but please give me some chloroform first."

—

Little Elmer, aged 5, was very proud when he donned his first pair of trousers, and taking his small 3-year-old sister into the hall, he was overheard to remark: "Say, Dollie, don't yo' 'member when I used to be a little girl like you?"

—

"Mamma," said 4-year-old Alice, holding up two pieces of a broken saucer belonging to her toy set, "I bwoked a dish; pwease sew it togevver!"

—

While dressing one morning small Eloise noticed her shoulder blades for the first time. "Oh, mamma!" she exclaimed. "I'll soon be an angel now; my wings are coming."

—

Caller—Well, Margie, how are you getting along in arithmetic at school?

Little Margie—Fine. I'm almost up to dismal fractions.

—

Jesse, aged 4, had bitten his lip for the first time. "Oh, m-mamma," he sobbed, "o-one of my f-front fooths stepped on p-part of my m-mouth!"

—

A fond mother while caressing her little daughter, aged 4, said: "Lola, what makes you so sweet?"

"I dess God spilded some sugar in my dust," was the unexpected reply.

—

Father—Well, Johnny, how did you come out at the school examination?

Johnny—Oh, first rate; I answered all the questions.

Father—How did you answer them?

Johnny—I said I didn't know.

Little Harold—Ma, can I have this cat board with us?

His Ma—Positively not!

Little Harold—Well, suppose he just rooms here and eats somewhere else?

—

Johnny, aged 5, had been chastised by his father for disobedience and running to his mother said: "Mamma, were all the bad men drowned in the flood?"

"Yes, dear," she replied.

"Well," continued Johnny, looking at his father with a frown, "do you think there will be another flood soon?"

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